

NEW-ENGLAND

Pleaded with,

And pressed to consider the things which
concern her

P E A C E

at least in this her Day:

O R,

A Seasonable and Serious Word of faithful Advice to the Churches and People of God (primarily those) in the *Massachusetts Colony*; musingly to Ponder, and bethink themselves, what is the Tendency, and will certainly be the sad Issue, of sundry unchristian and crooked wayes, which too too many have been turning aside unto, if persisted and gone on in.

Delivered in a Sermon Preached at Boston in New-England,
May. 7. 1673. being the Day of Election there.

By *Urian Oakes* Pastor of the Church of Christ in Cambridge.

Mic. 6. 3, 4. O my People what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me. For I brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants, and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron and Miriam.


Deut. 28. 58. 59. If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this Law that are written in this Book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful Name the Lord thy God. Then the Lord will make thy Plagues wonderful, and the Plagues of thy seed; even great Plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, &c.

Ezek. 18. 30. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruine.

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Christian Reader,

 *F* all Humane Societies on Earth, That which in Scripture is called Heaven, Rev. 4. 1, 2. Cap. 12, 13, 7. viz. the Church of God, and above all, that part of it: which is most sacred, upon the account of highest Reformation; hath greatest cause to serve the Lord with Fear, and rejoyce with Trembling: to Fear the Lord and his goodnes, to Dread his jealousie and Justice, and to walk humbly with her God. Height of dignity, Nearness of relation, and Choiceness of precious Priviledges, if not improved as effectual Obligations and Incitements to duty, will prove forest aggravations of sin, and provocations of wrath: Solomons Apostacie to Idolatry, 1 King. 11. 9. was more then a single sin, because against that God who had twice appeared to him, Amos 3. 2. You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. No provokings are comparable with those of Sons and Daughters, Deut. 32. 19. nor is there any fall like that of Jerusalem: in the day of the Lords fierce anger, shee came down wonderfully, because she had sinned grievously, Lam. 1. 8, 9. The Immutable God, (with whom there is not found so much as a shadow of change) is the same: he ever was infinitely Holy to hate, Just and Powerfull, to punish all proud and impenitent Apostates: Who ever hardned himself against him and prospered? Job 9. 4.

Are not the many severe threatnings recorded in Scripture (firstly breathed out against this and the other Church) and the dreadfull accomplishment of them, unto the ruine and perdition of so many (sometimes) famous Societies; intended to hold forth instruction to succeeding generations to the worlds end? the truth of the affirmative see unquestionably

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proved from Rev. 3. 7, 17. Cap. 3. 22. 1 Cor. 10. 6--12. Rom. 11. 20, 21. *WEE*, upon whom the ends of the world are come; have more places then Shiloh (Jer. 7. 12.) to go to: where is Jerusalem, what's become of Ephesus,, and other the (sometimes) so renowned golden Candlesticks? Is not Bethel become Beth aven, and the valley of Vision, turn'd into a valley of the shadow of Death? Shall we think our selves altogether unconcerned in what befell them: and conclude there are no treasures of wise pre caution, and prudent prevention, to be raked up out of the ashes of their ruines? ought not all people to hear and fear when malefactors are hung up in chains, Deut. 17. 12, 13. see Pro. 24. 30--33. How cheap is understanding offered to those, who are advantaged to purchase and procure it wholly at the cost of others? Let not the many pillars of Sale, which stand so thick in the way of the defections of a backsliding people, be heedlessly pass'd by, without once observing and considering, what they have from God to acquaint us with: When the dead are not dumb, let not the living be deafe, but hear and lay it to their hearts: O that we were wise that we understood this, that we would consider our latter end. To direct herein, and press hereto, was the Pious design of the Reverend Author of this Treatise, in the day whereon he was called to preach in, as a message from God, to a great and honourable Assembly of his people. The only impression then in his heart to desire and pray for, was That, upon the spirits of all humble hearers of, and tremblers at the word of God present: but by the concurrent and infortunate intercessories of very many his Brethren in the Ministry, pressing it as a hopeful Mean of glorifying God, and furthering the best good of his dear people in this Country; he hath been at last prevail'd with, to permit it to pass through the press, into the hands of such as desire to peruse and make a pious improvement of it.

Amongst the many things, which (as to the decaying and almost dying state of this poor Country) are of a very solemn signification, and awful import; there are some that in a valley of Consolation, seem so bold open a Door of hope; we shall take the liberty to mention two of them.

First. The number, and that (we hope) considerable, of mourning, faithfull, believing, praying Souls, these how ever over-looked, and looked down upon with scorn enough, (and possibly accounted the Troublers of our peace) by the *once a Week* (as they are called 2 Tim.

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3. 2.) men in their own conceits, of a higher *Elevation* and *Streine* of profession than others; are yet upon a true account the *Jechin* and *Boaz*, *Pillars* and *Strength* of our Temple-buildings, the *Salt* of our *Land*, and the *Chariots* and *Horsemen* of our *Israel*. Unto the *seven thousand* who (in the dayes of *Elijah*) had not bowed to *Baal*, and lay (like the foundation of some structure) hidden and unseen, did that *Apostate* people owe their not being utterly destroyed; they were the *Braces*, which held together the shaking parts, of that (almost) rotten building, when beside their own sins, they had against them the prayers of so great a Prophet, who upon his knees had wrought wonders.

O pray that the number and graces of such supporting *Pillars* may be more and more increased, unto a lengthning out of our *Tranquility*.

The Second is, That a Spirit of Zeal for, and Faithfulness to the glory of the blessed God, and the best good of his dear people, hath not hitherto (through grace) failed from those whom our glorious Lord and Saviour hath been pleased to send forth and make use of as his mouth and messengers to his poor saints and servants wildering in these *American desarts*; Have they not been heard crying aloud, and lifting up their voice like a trumpet, shewing Gods people their transgression and the house of *Isaac* their sins? have they not (in the feare of the Lord) conscientiously declined and abhorred, to palliate, dawbe and flatter, and upon the account of a carnall interest, to couple in and comply with men of corrupt principles and designs? May they not with some measure of holy boldness and good conscience say, as that great Apostle, *Acts* 20. 26, 27. that (brow beatings, censures, reproaches, calumnies and contempts notwithstanding) they have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God? if denyed, the Pulpits and seats of our houses of publick worship will attest it; and *New-England* (what ever the issue be of the contest between her and Christs Embassadours to her) shall know that there have been Prophets among them.

The Eminent faithfulness of the judicious Author, (which is his praise in our gates) in his thorow and home-plain-dealing in this Sermon or Treatise; as we believe it acceptable to God, so we are perswaded, it will procure it a friendly reception and entertainment in all humble hearts: For such as are otherwise afflicted, let them have thy pity and prayers.

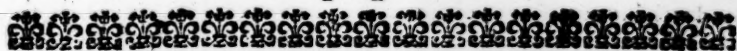
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Now the Good Lord vouchsafe so to Assist and Bless his poor Bu'lders and Watchmen, that they may not build and watch in vain; and so spare and save his people, that they may be kept from falling, and be presented faultless before the presence of his Glory with exceeding joy: Which is the hearts desire and prayer of us, Who are,

Thine in him who is both Lord and Christ.

John Sherman.
Thomas Shepard.

DEUT.



DEUTERONOMIE 32. 29.

O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.

Blessed *Moses* that Renowned Servant of the Lord, and King in *Israhur* (having served his own Generation by the Will of God, and performed his high and honourable Undertaking in Leading and conducting that untractable & rebellious People of Israel to the borders of *Canaan*, and after many Temptations and Exercises in the Wast and Howling Defart, brought them to a fair view, and near prospect of thit long promised and much desired Land) was just now ready to deliver up his trust, and resigne the weighty charge of that great Congregation unto *Joshua*, his servant and successor, on whom it was devolved by the immediate order and disposal of the Lord. You have in this Chapter his *Kuxueon Aōua* His Swan like Song, or his Farewell Sermon (as I may not ineptly call it) dictated to him by the Spirit of God, and delivered by him to that people at his departure from them into another World: And it is a very precious and a stately portion of Scripture. The *Hebrews* say of this Song of *Moses*, that it is a Summary of the whole Law, wherein mention is made of Gods Magnificence, the Creation of the World, the One true God that is to be Worshipped, the Generation of the Flood, the Division of Languages and Lands, the Election and Separation of the Children of *Israel* for the peculiar Treasure and Inheritance of the Lord, the benefits conferred upon them in the Wilderness, the future Resurrection of the dead, with many other things of great importance and concernment. You may well call it a Song of Degredation (as *David* doth some of his *Psalmes*) in respect of the superlative excellency of it: It is certainly a Prophetical Song, wherein we have a prediction, or Prophetical Declaration of what the Lord, the God of their Fathers, would do for that people of *Israel* in that good Land of *Canaan*; and of the manner of their demeanour and deportment of themselves there. *Moses* by the Spirit of Prophecie gives us in this Chapter, as in a true Glass, the feature of that People, as it look'd in after-times. He begins the Song with a Rhetorical & pathetical *Apocrophe*, wherein there is a most solemn

and...

and weighty commendation or appeal to Heaven and Earth, importing the deafness and stupidity of his hearers (that he had as good apply his speech to senseless and inanimate Creatures as to them) and the great concernment of what he had to speak, as fit and worthy that Heaven and Earth and all the World should hearken to it. After his *Exordium*, *Poem* or *Preface*, wherein he labours to procure Benevolence, Attention and Docility: You have,

1. A Narrative, wherein he commemorates the great benefits which had been, and were to be conferred on that people, from *ver. 4. to 15.* The Lord took special care in the first division of the habitable parts of the World, that there might be an Inheritance laid out for the Children of *Israel*, and assigned the Land of *Canaan* to them, *ver. 8.* He singled them out for his peculiar people, *ver. 9.* he conducted them graciously in the Wilderness, *ver. 10.* and afforded them not only safe conduct in the way, but also wholesome Instructions in his Laws and Commandments, *ibid.* He granted them protection from the many dangers they were exposed unto, and was as tender and careful of them as a man is of the Apple of his Eye, or the Eagle of her young ones, *ver. 10, 11.* He made comfortable provision for them in their Journey, introduced them into that Land flowing with *Milk and Honey*, confirmed and settled them in Possession and Fruition of the good things of it, *ver. 13, 14.* *Moses* mentions and records in this Song (which was appointed of the Lord to be written and taught the Children of *Israel*, that it might be a Song of Witness for the Lord against them, *Deut. 31. 19.*) these and other loving kindnesses of the Lord.

2. A Prediction of the Apostacy; Idolatry and horrible Ingratitude of *Israel*, from *ver. 15. to 19.* They would be so far from rendering again unto the Lord according to the benefits done unto them in that good Land, that they would requite him evil for good, and load him with their sins, [*Amos 6.*] as he loaded them with his benefits. All those Cords of a Man and Bands of Love with which the Lord drew them to himself, would not hold them or bind them fast unto him: but they quickly snapt all asunder, and broke loose from all engagements, and rushed on prodigiously and desperately in ways of Provocation and Rebellion.

3. A severe Commination of deserved Chastisements and Punishments, from *ver. 19, to 36.*

4. A Word of Consolation Administred unto them: from *ver. 36, to*

37. When they should have sinned themselves into a deplorable condition, so that all Humane helps and hopes failed, and their case in appea-

rance and to the eye of reason was desperate: God would then awake and arise and plead their cause against insolent and injurious Adversaries, and glorifie himself in their deliverance. He would certainly preserve alive an *Holy Seed, a Remnant in the worst times*, and shew himself faithful and bountiful, even to an undeserving people

5. The Conclusion of the song, wherein he predicts the multiplication of the Church, and enlargement of the Kingdom of Christ, and exhorts the remnant of *Israel* to praise God for their deliverance from their Babylonian Captivity; and the pious converted Gentiles for the vengeance executed upon the *Mystical Babylon*, that had detained them in spiritual bondage; and especially for the expiation of their sins by Jesus Christ which is by many Expositors, wit, and judicious, apprehended to be the sense and importance of the 43. verse.

Now in that part of the song which is *Comminatory*, and includes my Text, the Lord acquaints them by the hand of *Moses* with those dreadful and almost unparallel'd judgments and calamities (Temporal as well as Spiritual) that should be inflicted and executed on the account of their intolerable Provocations: yet not to a total and universal destruction and desolation. Though their sins were such as deserved utter extirpation and ruine, and their provocations so greivous and unsufferable that the Lord was ready to resolve to dissipate and blow them away, and make the remembrance of them to cease from among men, ver. 26. yet the clemency and goodness and moderation of the Lord's anger in the execution of his threatenings, should appear in the preservation of a remnant the impulsive cause whereof is intimated to be the consideration of the *Wrath and Infelice of the Adversary*, and the *Dishonour* that would redound to the *Name of God* thereby, ver. 27. which is amplified by the Antithesis of the impulsive cause that might have moved him to destroy them *after 7*, ver. 28. God renders the reason of his severe proceedings against them, why he heaped so many mischiefs and spent so many Arrows upon them, ver. 23. and was almost ready to blot out the Name and Memory of that People; namely this, *Because their folly was incurable*. For he doth not only signify in those words, that they did inconsiderately rush forward in ways of sin, and precipitate themselves into misery, because they wanted the actual exercise of judgement and sound reason: but that they acted at such a rate, as if there were not the least Drop or Dram of spiritual Wisdom in their hearts, nor a possibility in the course of ordinary means of seducing them *ad sanam mentem*, as judicious Calvin observes upon the place. Thereupon we have in the Words 'ead; a Pathetical Exclamation

tion, wherein the Lord (after the manner of men) passionately expresseth his desire that they would be spiritually wise to consider what would become of them, if they held on their course of sinning against the Lord: what would be the sad end and issue of their Rebellions against the God of their mercies. I know indeed that some understand these words, ver. 28, 29. as spoken of the Enemies of Israel. As if the Lord had said: If they were wise in deed, they would not say our hand is high and the Lord hath not done all this as ver. 27. nor attribute and ascribe their prosperous and victorious proceedings, and the destructions they had brought upon Israel to their own prowess and policy, but would easily understand that God had delivered up his People to misery and destruction for their sins. Yea, and they would consider also their own latter end, that is, what end remaineth for themselves also, even the like destruction for their great Abominations impenitently persisted in. But we have no reason to recede from the received common Interpretation of the Words, or question their immediate Application to the People of Israel. The Words are plainly spoken of Israel, the peculiar People of God, in a condition of great degeneracy: wherein the Lord intimates and expresseth.

1. The ground and occasion of that Misery and Ruine that was coming upon them, namely, their want of Counsel and Understanding, ver. 28. The misery that befel them at several seasons in these and those Generations was not either undeserved or accidental: but as the hand of God inflicted it in a way of just severity, so their incurable Folly and Unreasonableness was the meritorious cause that brought it upon them.

2. The Cure, the Help, the only Remedy, or rather, that which would have saved them and secured their Nation, with all the concerns of it from those Ruines, and prevented such a sad issue and calamitous event, namely, Wisdom, ver. 29. which is in the words of the Text, amplified from the Act and Object thereof.

First, The Act of this Wisdom: and that is double,

1. To Understand. Ob that they were wise, that they understood this. The Word so translated signifies also to prosper, and to make prosperous: because though men of Understanding are not alwayes, yet they are ordinarily prosperous, their counsels and actions are usually attended and aided on with success. The Word therefore may import a prosperous, successful, right understanding of things. Yet it signifies an acute and subtle and accurate understanding, with an intense and industrious exercise of the mind, and is contrary to a word [Chasal or Sachal] that signifies incognitancy, or idle levity in the managing of things as *Prov* 11. 12. observes.

observes. And considering the Conjugation wherein it is used, it signifies, to make (that is, to make themselves) to understand. Gods donation of this wisdom and understanding excludes not, but supposes our endeavours to acquire it.

2. To Consider: The Original word hath Affinity with *Banab* (as *Avenarius* notes) which signifies to build. A man of consideration must be like a wise *Architect* that disposes in his minde, contrives, conceives, models, frames and casts the several parts of his Fabrick or building. To consider is to cast, and conceive, and get the model or idea, the Platform (as it were) of this or that Object in our minds. And it notes a judicious, fixed or abiding dijudication of things.

Secondly, The Object of this Wisdom, Understanding and Consideration: and that is, *their latter End*. End in this place noteth not the final cause (as when we say, the last end of man is to glorifie God) but the *exitus*, the term, the issue, the upshot, the event and the conclusion of those sinful wayes they were engaged in. As when it is said the end of some way that seemeth right unto a man (are the wayes of death: and the end of some mirth is heaviness; Prov. 14. 12, 13. the wisdom of that people should have exprest it self in understanding and considering the latter end of their wayes. Not so much *finis operantis*, the end intended by themselves; as *finis operis*, the end of their wayes and doings, the scope, and tendency, and issue of their evil and unworthy deportment should have been considered by them.

I shall only adde, that the form of this expression in the Text is optative; O that they were wise, &c. we meet with the like form of speech, and mode of expression attributed to God in other places of Scripture. As Psal. 81. 13. O that my People had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my wayes, and Isai. 48. 18. O that thou hadst hearkened to my Commandments, &c. the like occurs in other places. There is indeed some difficulty in it; For you will say,

Obj. How can the Lord be said to wish this? He could have made them wise, and understanding, and considering men and women, if it had been his good will and pleasure. How can wishing and woulding be attributed to God in respect of those things which are never accomplished? How can such a relativity be ascribed to God without the impeachment of his wisdom, and power, and constancy, and blessedness.

Ans. This and the like expressions are spoken of God *anaprosopon* after the manner of men, and must be understood *descriptivè* in a

manner becoming the glorious Nature and Being of God. It is manifestly an expression borrowed from the manner of men, lamenting the rashness, the folly, the inconsiderateness of their Children, and their want of understanding, their ways and the issue of them. And yet we must understand, and take it up in a manner becoming and comporting with the perfect nature of the blessed God. The Lord doth not really and properly carry himself, as a Father that stands wringing his hands over a prodigal Son, and saith, *O that thou wouldst be wise, that thou wouldst understand thy self, that thou wouldst consider what these prodigal courses will come to at last*, what will be the end of thy Drunkenness, thy Laciviousness, thy Company keeping, thy great Idleness, and vain expence of precious Time, Estate and Strength in this manner! O that thou wouldst be like thy self and consider what will be the issue of these lewd ways and courses! the poor afflicted Father may wish and desire it, but hath not power to give such an heart: but God alone can do it. If the Lord had willed properly with the will of purpose, or decreed that Israel should be wise to understand and consider their latter end, he both could and would have conferred upon them that wisdom, and prudent consideration of it, and that without any impeachment of or detriment to the liberty of their wills. It is at first sight a strange expression which we meet with, *Deut. 10. 19. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, &c.* In the Original it is (word for word) *Who will give that their heart may be such in them*, as Mr. Ainsworth reads it. Why doth God need to ask the question: *who will give them such an heart?* He knows that none but himself can give such an heart, and that he can effectually give it: and he knows whether he hath determined to give it or not. And therefore the expression must be understood after the manner of men. It is evident to any understanding man, that these things cannot be spoken of God properly and rigorously (as the *Arminians* absurdly strain them) *salva Majestate Divina*. But we must say, *cum toto Theologorum Choro* (as judicious *Doctors* speak) that God in such forms of speech, that he may commodiously treat with man, doth *indueri se homine*, put on Man (as it were) or vest himself in the condition and properties of man, and propose his counsels to us in such a way wherein we may best apprehend them, and they may be most familiarized to us. The Lord in his Scripture-treaties with the Sons of men, very frequently applies himself to them in such a form or mode of expression as is best suited and accommodated to their understandings, because most familiar to them, and that which they are well accustomed unto. The great God in this *querimonious* form of speaking

return

resembles himself to a Father (*the Father of Spirits imitates and likens himself unto one of the Fathers of our Flesh*, as the Apostle phraseth it, *Heb. 12. 9.*) mournfully complaining of the folly of his Prodigal Son running out to excess of riot, and not considering what the end of such vicious & riotous courses will be. And yet it doth not argue, nor may we imagine, that God was willing, but unable to give his people of *Israel* this grace and wisdom without impeachment of the Creatures native liberty, or any violation of order settled and prefixed by himself. God doth not do and undo, and thereby contradict and deny himself: He doth not Decree not to confer this wisdom, and then wish there had been no such Decree to hinder the communication of that wisdom. He doth not give the Rational Creature such an absolute and uncontrollable liberty of will, that he cannot bend and encline their wills to what he will, and then repent, and wish that he had otherwise constituted the frame of their Rational Faculties: But if you divest the expression of that *Anthropopathy* that is in it, there are these and such like things imported therein.

1. A Graphical and Emphatical Expression of their want of wisdom and counsel, understanding and consideration: They were not spiritually wise, nor was it in their power to understand aright, or consider duely their latter end. Gods lamentation of their folly and inconsiderateness argues their lamentable condition in that respect.

2. That it was their duty to be so wise, as to understand and consider their latter end. Gods wishing this doth not necessarily import and argue the Creatures power, but their duty: not that they can of themselves, but that they ought to be thus wise. Their duty is hereby indigitated; that they ought to wish, and desire, and aspire after those things, which God (speaking after the manner of men) wisheth for them; and that it is their great fault if they neglect their duty herein.

3. That it is their interest and the wisest course they can fix upon wisely to mind and consider their latter end. It would be really good for themselves, and the best way to prevent misery and ruine. It would have been a very beneficial course, and turned to their great advantage.

4. It imports Gods approbation of, and complacency in this wisdom and wise consideration. That it would have been a very pleasing thing to him, as things wished for by men are wont to be unto them: As it would have proved their advantage and consolation; so, when God speaks so pathetically, he seems (as Mr. Caryl observes from a like Scripture) to include his own consolation in it, as well as theirs. *Oh that they were wise*, &c. as if he should say, as it would be good for them, so it would

be highly contentful to me, and for my great satisfaction. It is acceptable to God and pleasing to him to see this wise consideration in a people so circumstanced as *Israel was*. It doth not argue that God was pleased to give them wisdom to understand and consider *their latter end* (for then what should have obstructed the communication of it?) but that it would have pleased God, if he had observed it in them: he would have liked and approved it as agreeable to his Will. The Lord would have greatly delighted in such a frame and practise of his Covenant-people, and abundantly rewarded it.

5. That the want of this was the great cause of their rushing on prodigiously in a course of sin into misery. The Lord sufficiently intimates thereby, that all the mischief among them was occasioned through the want of a wise and understanding consideration of the event of things: This would have prevented it.

6. That this is the first and good step towards the repentance and reformation of a degenerate, backsliding and rebellious People, to consider what they are doing, whither they are going, and what the end of their wayes will be at last.

7 The nature of the Word of God and the dispensation thereof is signified hereby, *viz.* that it doth instantly perswade men to get this wisdom and understanding and considering (spirit, or wise consideration of the Event and Issue of their ways and doings. And that God will in the way of these moral means, (these patheticall expressions suited and accommodated to the manner of men) effectually work this wisdom and serious consideration of their latter end in some mens hearts, and that he doth eminently and *virtuali quadam ratione* (as the learned *Ames* expresseth it) will it as to other men, *saltem*, or so far forth as he commands and calls for it.

But I shall not detain you longer in the general Explication of the Text, or Solution of these or those Difficulties. The sum & result of all is; *Israel was a People of many mercies and singular enjoyments* (none like unto them) but wial of great provocations by their Apostacy, Idolatry, and other grievous miscarriages: and the Lord represents it here as their wisdom to consider rationally and judiciously what would be the sad and doleful issue thereof.

The Observation is plainly this:

Doct. That it is the great wisdom of a People that have been conducted by the Mighty Hand of God to a place of Rest and Liberty, and settled in the possession of singular Priviledges and enjoyments, to understand

stand and consider, or understandingly to consider what will be the latter end of their sinful wayes, their unsuitable and unworthy deportments before the Lord.

The People of Israel were in Covenant with God, peculiarly favoured and accepted of him: And in pursuance of his Covenant engagements he had delivered them out of hard bondage, and carried them in his Arms to Canaan, a Land of rest, and liberty, and glorious enjoyments, where they quickly trespassed and rebelled grievously against him (according to the prediction of *Moses in this Propheeticall Song*) and the Lord in the words of the Text plainly intimates it to be the wisdom of that People (and by parity of reason, of any other People that may be paralleled with them) at such a juncture, and in such a condition, to understand and consider (or to *consider with Consideration*, as the Original hath it significantly, *Jer. 23. 20.*) *what will be the latter end of their sinful and rebellious wayes.* The Lord tells, that People in the place but now mentioned, when he was about to bring a dreadful storm of wrath upon them, *that in the latter dayes they should consider it perfectly.* Surely then it would have been their great wisdom to consider it, in the former dayes, before the storm came, and the wrath of God arose against them, so that there was no remedy. Hence the Lord expostulates with the Jews, and calls them to a serious consideration of the end and issue of the general corruptions, and great evils found among them, *Ier. 5. 31.* *The Prophets prophesie falsely, and the Priests bear rule by their means, and my People love to have it so: And what will ye do in the end thereof?* when Prophets, Priests (or Princes) and People were so extremely bad, so wofully corrupt and faulty, it was time for them to look about them, and consider what would become of them at last. It is the guise and character of a Fool, *Prov. 17. 24.* *to have his eyes in the ends of the Earth, gazing and wandering about, looking hither and thither, far enough from his own concernments:* But it is an act of wisdom in any People, especially such a People as Israel; and the property of wise persons to have their eyes fixed upon the end of their wayes and walkings. The only Enquiry here will be,

Quest. What is it for a Person or People understandingly to consider the latter end of their wayes?

Ans. It implies evidently these Particulars:

1. To pass a right judgement upon it: to finde out and fix in their thoughts upon the true end and issue of their wayes according to the nature and tendency of them. To pitch upon it, and determine aright concerning it. For many men deceive themselves shamefully in this matter.

Many

many bold and presumptuous sinners (though they hear the words of the curse of the Law) do bless themselves in their hearts, saying *they shall have peace*, though they walk in the imagination of their hearts, to adde Drunkennes to thirst, Deut. 9. 19. Though they walk not in Gods ways (which are ways of pleasantness and peace) but in the crooked and destructive ways of their own besotted foolish hearts, yet they promise themselves a good issue, and vainly imagine that they shall do well enough at last. Though they walk in the ways of their hearts, and in the sight of their eyes, yet they think to hold up their Heads, and look the Lord Jesus with confidence in the Face, when God shall bring them into Judgement. As a Bird baseth to the Snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life, Prov. 7. 23. So many a rash, inconsiderate, deluded Sinner rusheth on headily in a course of Rebellion against God, and knows not that the end of it will be destruction. Such is sometimes the Blindness and Security, not only of particular persons, but of the Body of a People; that they cry peace and safety, and promise themselves Prosperity and a good Issue of those ways that end in sudden and unavoidable Calamity. Understanding consideration in the case before us, importeth thus much, that a person or people syllogize well, and conclude aright concerning the end of their ways and actions: that they do not *παράλογισθαι* (as the Apostle speaks, Iam. 1. 22.) reason themselves into a mistake and error or false conclusion about the end of their deportments towards the Lord, and put a fallacy upon their own Souls in this respect.

2. To revolve this in their minds, and to be frequently thinking of their latter end. To ponder it thoroughly, and to have their Souls, Judgements and Consciences much exercised with, interested and engaged in it. Consideration intends more then a transient thought, or sudden sitting apprehension. It imports a fixing, and dwelling upon this or that in our thoughts. Though sometimes the Object of consideration may be so plain and legible, that he that runs may read it; yet consideration is not a cursory work, or a running cogitation. It becomes a people (especially such as are so circumstanced as Israel) to be much conversant in this work and duty. There must be a Fixing and staying of their minds upon this Subject: as it were a steeping and soaking of their thoughts in the daily meditation of their latter End. Not only rolling or glancing, but fixing the eyes of the Understanding, and looking steadily upon it, is implied in this consideration. That a People do not trifle in it, but make a business of it. As David saith of his sin, that it was ever before him, Psal. 51. 3. So may a truly considering man say of his latter end, that it is ever before him.

Con-

Consideration keeps it within view and prospect, and will not suffer it to go out of sight and thoughts. There must be a *discursus mentis*, running to and fro (as the expression is, *Dan. 12. 4.*) traversing of this, and rolling it over and over in the mindes of men, if there be effectual consideration.

3. It connotes *sutable Affection of the heart*. Though Consideration (if we speak accurately) is an act of the Understanding, yet it imports (in the Scripture dialect and use) sutable affection. It is not in the Text a bare speculation, or meer contemplation of *the latter end of their wayes* that is intended by the Lord, but that which enwraps in it sutable actings of the Will and Affections, and hath a benign or beneficial influence upon the Heart, or Will and Affections, to frame, and shape, and mould, and fashion them accordingly. And in this case, the End being miserable, to consider it, is to be sutable affected with it, so as to mourn for, hate and loath those wayes that will be bitterness in the end, to have a real aversion of them, to repent and turn from them, to relinquish and abandon them as destructive and pernicious; so to think, as that the minde may affect the heart, and consequently both minde and heart influence and regulate and reform the conversation: as David saith, *I thought on my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies*, *Psal. 119. 59.* Serious consideration of *the latter end of a mans sinful wayes*, will have a converting influence upon his affections and conversation. This Consideration, if it be right, hath a kinde of imperious and commanding influence upon the hearts and lives of men.

Reas. 1. Because it is the great act of Wisdome to deduce, and regularly to inferre one thing from another. And so one of the Jewish Doctors saith, that *ἡ δὲ σοφία ἐστὶν ὅταν τινος ἀποδείξῃ ἀπὸ τινος*, and one thing deduced from another. Sapience or Wisdome properly belongs to *Syllogistical Judgement*, and is a virtue of the Understanding, whereby a man discerns the dependance of things, and how one follows upon another. To consider understandingly what will be the End of these or those wayes, imports in it a laying of things together in a Syllogistical way. Hence when men reason amiss, and conclude that which is not virtually contained in the Premises, or make wrong inferences, they are said to Paralogize themselves. *Be ye doers of the word* (saith the Apostle, *1. Tim. 2. 22.*) and not hearers only, *παρολογίζομενοι εἰ αὐτὸν*. We are constant hearers of the Word, and waiters upon the Ordinances of God; therefore we are certainly in a good condition. The Apostle calls this a Paralogism, Sophistical Reasoning, and unsound Argumentation, where with many Professors are wont to cheat themselves. So, *We are Abraham's children*, a people in Covenant with God, and we have his Temple

and Worship, and Ordinances among us : therefore though we indulge to sin, and do these and those abominations, yet God will dwell among us, and we shall do well enough. These are lying words, false inferential Inferences, and foolish Reasonings. But to syllogize aright concerning the End of these and those ways, is an act of Wisdom indeed. This is the work of Conscience, when it relates to the Moral actions of a man, and the issue of them; and it belongs to Syllogistical Judgement. This will follow upon that; this will be the certain Consequent of such an Antecedent; this will be the Conclusion resulting from those Premises. Wisdom lies in the Rational Application of general Rules of Scripture to our selves and our own conditions, and in the induction of particulars, and due Reasoning from it: This hath been the End of such and such ways, to these and those persons (witness Scripture and Experience) therefore will be so of mine also. The End is virtually in the way, as the Conclusion in the Premises. To consider and find out this, and reason aright in this matter, is an act of great wisdom and judgement.

Reas. 2. Because it is the unquestionable duty of any people, especially such a people, to consider their latter End. What the Lord wisheth they might do, and would do, was their undoubted duty to do: and it is certainly the great wisdom of any person or people, to do their duty. There can be no greater wisdom then to conform to, and comply with every part of the revealed will of God. The Lord calls aloud upon that people of Israel again and again to consider their ways, Haggai 1. 5, 7. that is, the sad fruit and issue of them. Their building their own houses, and pursuing their private Interests and Advantages, with the shameful neglect of publick Temple-work, was attended and followed with a visible Blasting Curse of God upon their Labours and Enjoyments; and he commands them to consider it. It is the duty of a person or people, because God hath commanded it, and it is their wisdom to attend it, because what God commands is for their good; as Moses intimates to them, Deut. 10. 12. We cannot please God, but in a way of obedience and duty: now to please God is our wisdom and happiness. Men cannot walk before God in all good conscience, that want this understanding consideration of the End of their ways. Conscience is the Judgement of man concerning his state and actions, with reference; and as he is subject to the Law of God. It is the office of Conscience to review, and to make a recognition of a man's actions, to compare them with the Law of God, and to conclude upon the state of a man, and the event of his ways and actions accordingly. This is the work, and office, and exercise of Conscience. To keep Conscience awake and at work in this man-

ner is the duty, and the wisdom (because the duty) of God's Israel.

Reas. 3. Because it is their great Interest, a very beneficial and advantageous course, and makes very much for their well-being, understandingly to consider their wayes, and the latter End of them. This is the way for a people to do well for themselves, as it is the way for every particular person to do well for himself, as David speaks in another case, *Psal. 49. 18. They that are wise in this respect, are wise for themselves, as Solomon expresseth it, Prov. 9. 12.* The great enquiry of any wise man, when he is about to lift up his hand to any Enterprize, and ready to engage in this or that business, will be, *Cui bono?* To what purpose? what benefit will redound and accrue thereby? *Interest* and *Advantage* is wont to lead men captive, and to influence them marvellously: and there is ordinarily no surer way to prevail with them, then by arguing *ab Utili*, and demonstrating the advantageousness and expediency of any course or duty. Hence the Lord, when he would reason his people into a Care and Conscience of universal obedience to his Commandments in general, argues from this Topick or Head of Argument, *Ut tibi bene sit, That it may go well with thee, Deut. 4. 40. — 5. 29. — 6. 3, 18. — 12. 28.* So may I reason in this case from the profit and advantage of such a course of consideration. A person or people do consult their own good, and singular advantage in it. Hereby they may come to understand the signs of the Times, the want of which still our Saviour taxeth severely, *Matth. 16. 2, 3.* Men are usually wise to discern the signs of the Weather, and can probably conjecture when it will be fair, and when it will be foul Weather: but this is Wisdom indeed, to understand and discern the dispensations of God, in a way of *Mercy* or *Judgement*, beforehand, and to know what God is doing, or about to do with them. As men can by the Aspect of the Sky prognosticate what Weather it will be: so they may be able to make a *Judgement* of their condition, and what is like to become of them, by the Aspect of their own wayes and deportments towards the Lord. Hereby they may know what to expect from the Lord, whether *Mercy* or *Judgement*, according to the ordinary Rule and Tenour of Gods dispensations. Hereby they may be swayed to Repentance, and the casting away or turning from those iniquities and transgressions that are otherwise sure to be their Ruine, *Ezek. 18. 30, 31.* Mark these steps, *ver. 28. Because he hath considered, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.* Consideration makes way for Repentance and Conversion, and thus for life and happiness. Serious consideration of the nature and End of our wayes, leads the way to Repentance and Reformation. Hereby they

they may be quickned and helped to meet God, when he is coming forth in the way of his Judgements, in a way of Humiliation and Supplication, Amos 4.12. and to wait for him in the way of his Judgements, Isa. 26.8. And if there be any way to avert the Judgements of God, this is it. Hereby they may know how to order their Prayers, and get into the gap, and prevent the Judgements of God that are in their way towards them, and obviate them. And it is of singular use to *Magistrates, Ministers, Governours* of these and those Societies, that have Power and Interest, and are in a capacity to lead on in a way of Reformation, and to command those that are under them to keep the way of the Lord, Gen. 18. 19. Hereby they will come to see the Justice of God in his severest Corrections, and learn to justify him in all his proceedings, and accept the punishment of their iniquities, and bear the indignation of the Lord, because they have sinned against him. When they consider aright the scope and tendency, the inequality and demerit of their own wayes, they will readily apprehend the Justice and Equitableness of God's hand, in bringing a miserable End upon them. So that it is the great Interest, and therefore Wisdome of a people (in these and other respects) to consider their latter end. I still only adde for a close here, That the Reasons given, as they demonstrate it to be the wisdome of any people in general to consider their latter End; so they may be argued a Fortiori, as to a people circumstanced as *Israel* was: Because they are peculiarly advantaged for the Inigation or Discovery of the End and Issue of their wayes, and are in the best capacity to finde out, and pass a right Judgement upon the tendency and conclusion of them; As also, because the end of their sinful wayes impenitently persisted in, must needs be worse then of any other people. They cannot sin at so cheap a rate, or expect so few stripes for their disobedience, or look for such moderation from God in the inflicting of his Judgements, and execution of his Threatnings, or rationally hope for so tolerable a condition at last, as other people that are not like them, but far inferiour in their Priviledges and Enjoyments. So that it is their great Concern in a peculiar manner to consider what will be the latter End of their unseemly and unbecoming deportments before the Lord. *Jerusalem* is not remembring her sin, and brought her down wonderfully, Lam. 1.21. Want of this consideration will ruine any people; but it will make way for wonderful and unparalleld destruction of such as are circumstanced as *Israel* was, in the serious and timous remembrance of the End of their wayes, will be the way for their wonderful Exaltation.

Use of Teachers action, *First*. To Admitt stand here before the Lord in this great Assembly.

Oh be persuaded to consider your latter End. If it be the great wisdom of a people in general, the Body of them, thus and so circumstanced, then also it is the concernment of particular persons *understandingly to consider what will be the End and Issue of their sinful deportments before the Lord.* Consider what is the true tendency of your wayes and courses, whither you are going, whether to Happiness or Misery, to Heaven or Hell; what is like to be your journeys end, whither you are bound, and where it is probable you shall arrive and take up your abode for Eternity. All is well that ends well. Therefore

1. *Make a right Judgement of the End of your Actions.* Solomon layes a Rub in the way of the Young man in his full Career after the Enjoyment of his Luits, when he saith, *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgement,* Eccles. 11.9. that is, Remember that all thy wayes of sin will end in Judgement, or a dreadful sentence of wrath, and everlasting separation from God. Thou art now pleasing thy self in the wayes of thy own heart, accounting practical and serious Piety meer Folly, applauding thy Wit, and Parts, and Policy, but in thy latter end thou wilt be a Fool. Now the Gospel is foolishness, Religion is foolishness, Praying in secret, walking humbly and mournfully with God, is foolishness in thy deluded apprehension: And the people of God that deny themselves, and *crucifie the flesh, with the affections and lusts,* and will not *run with you to the same excess of riot,* are a company of weak and foolish men in thy valuation: but who dost think will be the fool at last? Oh think over and over what will be the end of *impunity and perseverance in a course of sinning against God.* *Consider your transgressions* (saith the Lord, Ezek 18.30,31.) *repent, and turn from them, so iniquity shall not be your ruine:* importing, that ruine will be the end of sin not repented of. Consider what will be the end of thy Unbelief, thy contempt of Jesus Christ, thy comparative hatred of him, and preferring thy base lusts before him. The end of Faith is the salvation of the soul, 1 Pet. 1.9. therefore the end of Unbelief will be the perdition of the soul. The end of neglecting great salvation, will be unavoidable misery, Heb 2.3. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* Yea the end of thy positive Unbelief, in rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ revealed and offered in the Gospel, shall be a more intolerable condition then that of Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, (the Cities which God overthrow and repented not) Turks and Indians, Heathens and Infidels, Mat. 11.21,22,23,24. Oh play the men, act the part of rational

tures, set your rational Faculties, your *Understandings* and *Consciences* a-work; consider and know *whither* you are going, and what the issue of your wayes is like to be. As *Solomon* saith of the house of the strange woman, that it *enclinneth unto death, and her paths to the dead*, Prov. 2. 18. so may I say of the sinful courses and pra^{ct}ises of men. What are the fons of men generally doing, but laying wait for their own blood? Prov. 1. 18. plotting, as it were, and projecting, contriving and accomplishing their own destruction, and know it not. Wicked men are inconsiderate men, and their way is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble, Prov. 4. 19. The end of their way is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword; their feet go down to death, and their steps take hold of hell, as *Solomon* speaks to another sense, Prov. 5. 4, 5. Can a man take fire in his bosome? or go upon hot coals and not be burnt? Prov. 6. 27, 28. You would account him a poor distracted creature that should so do, and think to escape without harm and inconvenience. Sinners are as irrational, and as much bereaved of sense and understanding, that dally with sin, and play with the Serpent that hath a speckled skin, and consider not that it will sting them to death at last. Thou goest after thy Lusts, as the Ox to the slaughter, or as the Bird hasteth to the snare, and knowest not that it is for thy life, Prov. 7. 22, 23. Remember and judge aright, that the end of your natural lives will be death, and the end of your sinful lives will be Hell. Take heed, lest thou mourn at last (as *Solomon* speaks, Prov. 5. 11.) though thou rejoyce at present. Make a right Judgement in this respect.

2. Fix and dwell upon the consideration of the latter End of your wayes. Settle it upon your hearts by frequent and thorough Meditation, that it may stick by you, and abide with you; hold your hearts to it, and let not your thoughts easily divert and slip aside from the serious consideration of it. Do not rest in a slight and sudden apprehension of it, but roll it in your mindes, and ponder it thoroughly, that you may lay the whole weight of this consideration upon your Souls. Do not men know very well that the end of Swearing, and Drunkenness, and Uncleanness, and Disobedience to Parents, and Profanation of the Sabbath, and Unfruitfulness under Ordinances, and of deriding and maligning the wayes of godliness, and those that walk in them, will be death and destruction from the Lord? Yes verily; but they do not consider it, and revolve it in their mindes, so as to affect their hearts with it. Oh ponder the path of thy feet, and consider much and often *whither* it will lead thee in the conclusion.

3. So consider the end of thy way of sinning, as to put an end to thy way of sinning: So as to break off thy course of sinning by sound Repentance, serious Application to the blood of Christ for forgiveness, effectual Conversion

version to God, and thorough Reformation of thy Life and Conversation. Consideration is not meer speculative Contemplation, but practical Reformation must be the end of it, as it was of *Davia's* consideration, *Psal. 119. 59. I thought on my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.* The *Jews* report it for a saying of *Adam*, that *No man would sin, if he saw from the beginning to the end of things.* But I shall not stay longer on this Branch of the Exhortation.

Secondly, As the words of my Text respect the *Body of a Nation*, even *Israel*, that were sometimes the peculiar people of God: So give me leave to direct my Exhortation to the People of *New-England*, or the Representative Body of the People of this Colony, and to perswade the *New-England-Israel* to get and improve this Spiritual wisdom, *Understandingly and judiciously to consider what will be the latter End of your sinful wayes, and unworthy deportments before the Lord.* As you are a people of many Mercies and Priviledges, so I may well parallel you with *Israel*, a people graciously conducted and carried by the mighty hand of God to a place of Rest, and Peace, and Safety, and Liberty; and settled in the possession of singular Mercies and Advantages: and I wish with all my heart that we could not see a cast of their countenance in our own faces; that as in water face answereth to face (*Prov. 27. 19.*) so our spirits and wayes did not answer theirs, & that our misdemeanors and unsutable deportments, were not commensurate & correspondent with theirs, as our mercies are. I make out the Parallel thus.

1. *You have been conducted to a place of Rest and Liberty, and settled in the possession of very choice and singular Priviledges & Enjoyments.* The Lord hath brought you over the great Ocean from your Native Land, the Land of your Progenitors, to a place of Rest, where you have enjoyed singular mercies. As when there was a Division made of the habitable parts of the Earth to the sons of *Adam*, there was an Assignment of that good Land of *Canaan* in the purpose of God to the Children of *Israel* (which seems to be the sense and importance of that difficult place, *Deut. 32. 8.* which hath put Expositors, as the body of *Ahab* in the way did the people, *2 Sam. 2. 23.* to a Rand) so was there an Allotment, in the Counsel of God, of these Ends of the Earth unto this part of our Nation for the Bounds of their Habitation. This Wilderness was the place which God decreed to make a *Canaan* to you: and what he thought in his heart, he hath fulfilled with his hand, in bringing you to this good Land, and providing wonderfully for your well-being here. Many and wonderful are the Favours and Priviledges which the Lord your God hath conferred upon you.

1. *As to your Civil Government.* You have had *Moses*, Men, I mean, of the same Spirit, to lead and go before you. The Lord hath not given Children to be your Leaders, and Babes to rule over you, which is threatened as a great Judgment,

Judgement, portending and making way for the ruine of *Jerusalem*, and fall of *Judah*, *Iſa.* 3. 4. 8.) but Pious, Faithful, Prudent Magistrates, men in Wisdom and Understanding. He hath not set Task-masters and Oppressors over us, or caused those that hate us to rule over us, as he threatens, *Lev.* 26. 17. *As a roaring Lion and a ranging Bear, so is a wicked Ruler over the poor people*, *Prov.* 28. 15. God hath delivered you from the Paw of the Lion and of the Bear, so that you have not known by woful experience to this day, what a wicked oppressing Ruler means, nor seen one of these cruel and imperious Beasts among you. God hath not given us Rulers that would flaece us, that would pull the bread out of our mouthes, that would grinde our faces and break our bones, that would undermine and rob us of our Liberties, *Civil and Religious*, to the enslaving of this people and their children after them: but he hath given us men of *Nehemiah's* spirit, that have not sought themselves, but sincerely designed the good, and consulted the welfare and prosperity of these Plantations, to go in and out before us: Men that have not rigorously exacted the bread of the Governour, (*Neb.* 5. 18.) but have chearfully receded from their own Right, Sympathizing with, and compassionately considering the low estate and condition of this people. Nor hath the Lord in displeasure left us to be *Levellers* and *Libertines*, to do every man what seems good in his own eyes. Thus far he hath delivered us from *Anarchy* and *Confusion*, as well as from *Tyranny*; and set over us pious and faithful Rulers, that have been indeed (according to the obligation & intendment of their Office, *Rom.* 13. 3, 4.) a terror to evil, and not to good works, and *Ministers of God to us for good*: which is an admirable and invaluable mercy. I know indeed that profane and licentious persons would have Magistrates that would connive at, and countenance their *Swearing*, and *Drunkenness*, and *Filthiness*, and *Sabbath-breaking*, and the like gross enormities, that there might be no *Master of Restraint*, or *Coercive Power* exercised in the land, that they might sin without controul, and go to hell without interruption or molestation: and that *manton Gospellers*, giddy Professors, men of corrupt mindes, would have Magistrates that will allow them in publishing and spreading their damnable Heresies, disturbing the Peace and Order of the Churches of Christ, and spurning at, or setting their foot upon all that is precious and sacred amongst us. But behold the goodness and patience of God! notwithstanding all our contempt of them, murmurings against them, unsutable behavior towards them, insensibleness of the greatness of our mercy in the enjoyment of them, uneasiness of too many dissatisfied persons under their Government, or attempts of men to bereave us of them, yet we have still our rulers as at the first, & our counsellors as at the beginning. And though many of our worthy Patriots have acted their parts graciously, wisely, faithfully, & gone off the stage with honor, yet there

there is a *ſucceſſion* or ſucceſſion of men in their places of the like Spirit, Principles and Abilities. This is becauſe *the Lord our God hath loved our Iſrael*, 2 Chron. 9. 8. God hath walled us about with a godly Ma-giſtracy, given us Rulers out of our ſelves (which was the privilege of Iſrael, that they might take wiſe men, and underſtanding, and known among their Tribes to be Rulers over them, Deut. 1. 13.) & hath cauſed juſtice and judgement to run down among us as a mighty ſtream. One of the great miſeries of the World is the Tyranny and Oppreſſion of Rulers: God hath thus far ſecured you from it, and given you to taſte the ſweet and pleaſant fruits of a good Ma-giſtracy. Good Ma-giſtrates, good Laws, and the vigorous Execution of them hath been the privilege and glory of *New-England*, wherein you have been advanced above moſt of the Nations of the Earth. This is a mercy of no ſmall elevation.

2. *As to your Sanctuary mercies.* God hath ſequeſtered you from the reſt of the World, allured you into this Wilderneſs, and brought you into theſe parts of the Earth (out of the ſtreets of Rome, as ſome conceive, whether rightly or no, I cannot determine) that you might ſet up his way and worſhip in the purity and Goſpel-glory of it. This was the reſreſhing mercy of God to his People when he firſt brought them over, and that which ſweetned to them many a bitter Cup, and ſupported them under the burdenſome inconveniencies of a Wilderneſs condition. Here you have ſeen the goings of God in the Sanctuary; *the ſingers before and the players on Inſtruments after*, *Psalm. 68. 24, 25* the orderly Adminiſtration of the Worſhip and Ordinances of God. Church-officers duly qualified, and ſet apart to their work and ruling authoritatively in the Lord, according to the order of the Goſpel, uſing their power to edification, and not to deſtruction: And Church members allowed, and uſing their liberty and privilege, obeying and conſenting in a due exerciſe of their Judgement of Diſcretion. The Doctrine of Faith duly diſpenſed the worſhip of God ſolemnly celebrated without the mixture of humane Inventions and Diſcipline adminiſtered (for the ſubſtance thereof) according to the appointment of Jeſus Chriſt. And in caſe of difficulties emerging through want of light or peace, *Councils* orderly aſſembling and acting in the fear of God, *Minifterially* declaring the mind of God, and commending their advice to the Churches concerned, without any irregular impoſing upon their liberty. And this courſe alſo attended generally with the Bleſſing of God for the final iſſue of controverſies, and ending of differences. Theſe are ſuch mercies as are almoſt appropriately yours, if all circumſtances be conſidered: ſo that hardly any People

under heaven equal you in this respect. God hath instructed us, as he did Israel in the Wilderness, *Deut. 32. 10.* you have been provided of all helps and advantages for the edification of your souls and a rich Blessing upon them. This is the Milk and Honey with which this *Canaan* (though a Wilderness) flows. Here you have seen the Rivers, the Floods, the Brooks of Honey and Butter, *Job 20. 17.* And for the continuance of these mercies, the Lord hath given you Schools of Learning, and prospered that work of the education of your Children in the hands of those that have undertaken it, both in our private Schools, and in the Colledge (that Nursery of Piety and good Literature) even to admiration. So that God hath made this Wilderness to be glad for his People, and this Desert to rejoyce and blossom as a Rose, *Isai. 35. 1.*

3 As to those great blessings of Peace and Plenty, at least a competency and sufficiency of outward comforts. You have here in these Chambers of Secresie and Safety which God hath brought you into, in this place of Retirement and Hiding, enjoyed peace and rest, when other parts of the World have been embroiled, and that dear Nation of which you are a part, hath been involved in Blood and Distractions, emptied from Vessel to Vessel, undergoing strange alterations. The Lord hath been a Wall of fire about us, and his salvation appointed for Walls and Bulwarks to us. Here the glorious Lord hath been unto us a place of broad Rivers and Streams; to defend us from all annoyances: And our eyes have seen our Sion, the City of our Solemnities and our Jerusalem a quiet Habitation, a Tabernacle not taken down, neither the stakes removed, nor Cords broken, *Isai. 33. 20, 21.* The mercy of the Lord hath compassed about his People that have trusted in him. Deliverances have been commanded seasonably, and no weapon formed against us hath prospered. God hath found us in this Desert Land, and compassed us about, and kept us as the Apple of his Eye, *Deut. 32. 10.* And all that have attempted to devour you have offended, and evil hath come upon them: just as it was with the Adversaries of Israel, *Jer. 2. 3.* God hath scattered his favours, and dealt out his blessings with a liberal hand to you: Having blessed you in basket and store, & raised you up to some considerableness in the World from low beginnings. Gods People followed him into this Wilderness for Himself, and for his Kingdome and Righteousness, & he hath added & cast in over and above other things also: when they came, they asked Communion with Himself, in his Worship and Ordinances; this was the one thing they desired, as David speaks, *Psal. 27. 4.* And he hath in a way of surplusage and advantage, over and above given them other mercies. Yea, and as he saith

to David, 2 Sam. 7. 8. If what he hath done had not been enough, he would moreover have given you such and such things. He hath given you more in a sense then he promised you, much more then the first Ad-venturers and Undertakers could rationally expect or promise themselves in a Wilderness.

And indeed, if we cast up the Accompt, and Summe up all our mercies, and lay all things together, this our Common-wealth seems to exhibit to us a specimen, or a little model of the Kingdome of Christ upon Earth, not in the wild sense of those that are called *Pist-monarchy men*, but in the sober sense of many of our Divines, wherein it is generally acknowledged and expected. This work of God set on foot and advanced to a good Degree here, being spread over the face of the Earth, and perfected as to greater Degrees of Light and Grace and Gospel glory will be (as I conceive) the Kingdome of Jesus Christ so much spoken of. When this is accom-
plished, you may then say *He hath taken to himself his great Power and Reign, and that the Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*, Rev. 1. 5, 17 You have been *as a City upon an hill*; though in a remote and obscure Wilderness) *as a Candle in the Candlestick that gives light to the whole House*. You have, to a considerable Degree, enlightened the whole House (world I mean) as to the pattern of Gods House, the Form and Fashion and Outgoings and Incomings thereof: convinced and helped many, and test others; that shut their eyes against the Light of your Profession and Practice, without excuse. God hath been doing (in my Apprehension) the same thing for the substance of it here, that shall be done more universally and gloriously, when Israel shall blossom & bud & fill the face of the world with fruit. Isa. 27. 6 you have been though an handful of people separated from the greatest part of the Christian World; as it is prophesied of Jacobs remnant that it should be in the midst of many people. Mic. 5. 7. *as a Tower from the Lord, and as the towers upon the grass*. God hath privileged and honoured you greatly in this respect.

2 All this hath been accomplished for you by the mighty Hand of God. Though not in a way of miracle (as it was with Israel of old) yet in a way of wonders of mercy and Grace, and glorious appearances. All this is not come to pass, either by the meer counsel of man, or by chance and Accident. They were wise and sober, and industrious and good men that laid our Foundations, and did what men could do, (in their several capacities) towards the settling us upon lasting Foundations of Righteousness and Holiness: but there hath all along appeared more of God then of

man is it. It must be acknowledged with all Humility and Thankfulness, that it is God himself that hath brought us hitherto, as David speaks *2 Sam. 7. 18.* you got not this Land with your own Sword or Bow; your power and policy; *Conse ye from man in this respect.* But it was a Land which the Lord espied out for you. *Exe. 20. 6.* I may appeal confidently to the consciences of those that hear me, that have any pleasure in the great works of God, and have considered the operation of his hands. Was it not the mighty hand of God upon those Worthies that first came over, that touched and bowed their hearts, that made them willing to leave a pleasant Land (*Dulce solum natale*) the Land of their Fathers Sepulchers, and of their own Nativities, to relinquish their settlements and fair accommodations (as to many of them) and their dear Friends & Relations, that they loved as their own souls, with whom it was in their hearts to have lived and dyed: and to cast, not their bread, but, themselves and their Families upon the great waters, to venture all upon the mere mercy of God (who called them to his foot as he did the *righteous man whom he raised from the East. Isa. 41. 2.*) And to follow him into a wilderness, a land that was not sown, a place of great hardships and difficulties? And was it not God who then sweetned their wilderness condition to them, conducted them as with the *Pillar of Cloud and Fire*, protected them from the many dangers that threatned them, and directed them (being *a Sun as well as a shield unto them. Psal. 84. 11.*) in the happy settlement of Church and State, effecting great things by small and Jespicable means? was it not the same mighty hand of God, that routed and put to flight the Spirit of Error and Heresie that was growing and getting head among you in your beginning times, plainly threatning the subversion of your State, and the destruction of your Civil and Sacred Concernments and Enjoyments? was it not the same Almighty Arm that vanquished the *Pequot*, and put the dread and terrour of you into the hearts of the Natives, that you have awelt safely in this wilderness, and slept securely in these woods? *Exek. 34. 25.* Hath not the Lord given a miscarrying womb unto all such as have conceived and been big with mischievous designs against you? Infomuch that all their counsels and endeavours have been abortive and fruitless? Hath not the same Hand of the most High broken the head of many a *Leviathan* in pieces, and given him to be meat to (the Faith of) his people inhabiting this wilderness? *Psal. 74. 14.* Hath not that glorious hand of God been stretched out from year to year for your Defence and Deliverance, though you are maligned and envyed, and there have been Attempts and hazardous ones too, made upon you? you have had
sensible

sensible experience of the lighting down of the omnipotent Arm of God on your behalf. Happy art thou Oh *New-England-Israel!* who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, *his Shield of thy help, and who is thy Sword of thy Excellence; and thine enemies have been found lyars unto thee:* as *Moses* speaks upon consideration of the Condition of that *Israel*, Deut. 33. 29. So that as he saith, *Bless ye the Lord from the Fountain of Israel. Psal. 68. 26.* That is, either you that derive your Original from the Fountain of *Jacob* and *Israel*, that descend from him as his natural off-spring and Posterity, (as the words are generally expounded.) or (if I may be allowed so to gloss and improve them) Bless him for all the mercies that have been conferred upon you from the Fountain, or first Original of *Israel* to this Day. So, let the Successors and seed of those that laid our Foundations bless the Lord, yea, *let their souls and all within them bless his holy name*, for all that he hath done for us from the Fountain and Foundation of this plantation. We may say with wonderment (almost in the words of *Moses*, Deut. 4. 32. Ask now of many of the Ages that are past, and ask from one side of Heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such Thing as this great Thing is, or hath been heard like it, for many generations? Hath God essayed to go and take him a part of a Nation from the midst of a Nation, by temptations, by signs, by wonders, by a mighty hand & by an out-stretched arm, according to all that the Lord your God hath done for you before your eyes? God hath shewn us almost unexampled unparallelled mercy. And it were very well if there were a memorial of these things faithfully drawn up, and transmitted to Posterity, as the Reverend Servant of God, that spoke to you the last year, moved and advised. Mr. *Shepard's* Election Sermon, pag. 15. 16. However it is our great duty to be the Lords Remembrancers or Recordars, Isa. 62. 6. that the mercies of the Lord (that hath allured us into this wilderness, spoken comfortably to us and dealt bountifully with us therein) may be faithfully registered in our hearts, and remembered by us. It is a desirable thing, that all the loving kindnesses of God, and his singular favours to this poor and despised out-cast might be Chronicled and communicated (in the History of them) to succeeding Ages; that the memory of them may not dy and be extinct, with the present Generation: And it is the unquestionable duty of every one of us to keep in mind and consider the signal works of the Lord, and the operation of his hands for and in the behalf of his dear people in this wilderness.

Now then, this being your Condition that you are in a manner parallel with *Israel* in their mercies: and that in the apprehension of all consider-

ing men we are too like them in their sinful deportments, also: (all sides are agreed that things are in a declining posture, that there is a great degeneracy, that things look with another face, that there is a defection and declension: though all are not resolved wherein it doth consist, some charging it one way, some another, as their judgement or Affection, or party and Interest leads them; yet they all center in this, that there is a back sliding and declension among us.) Give me leave therefore, (who am much a stranger) to take it for granted, not only from my own observation, but especially from the *the* Confession of all parties, (and what better evidence can be expected?) that this Noble vine planted by the Lords own right hand is become degenerate, that your wayes are unanswerable to the wayes of God, that your deportments are unsuitable to your engagements and the Lords expectations; and therefore to pursue the Exhortation in beseeching and perswading you to understand and Consider what is like to be your latter end. It will be your Interest to Consider, first, whence you are fallen, Rev. 2. 5. And then, whither you are going, or falling by your iniquity. Hos. 14. 1. And what the end and Issue of your sinful wayes will be. This is that which my Text leads me to prosecute. And truly, we think I hear the Lord speaking these very words of New England as thus: *Day after to day they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.* As Christ sometimes stood weeping over Jerusalem, & said, *Quarta tu habuisti known even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!* Luk. 19. 41. 42. So we think the Lord Jesus is this day standing above, beholding us from the height of his glory, and saying, *O how my dear people in New England (whom I have peculiarly loved, and pitied, and protected, and blessed, were wise, and would consider, understand, and rationally what the end of their sinful deportments before me will be at last.* I hope he doth not add; *But now this wisdom is hid from their eyes.*

I confess I was under some temptation to have singled out such a Subject to the Discussion or Haudling whereof some general Christian Duties might have been commended to this great Assembly (so considerable as to the quality and publick capacity, as well as number of the Auditors,) to have declined all such Discourses as might seem to grate, or reflect blame, and bear too hard upon these or those. I would not have the Ministers of Christ needlessly to tamper or intermeddle with State affairs, or direct and dictate to Rulers, and intrude themselves into such things as are out of their sphere, and foreign to their calling and profession, unless upon insuperable occasions. I have seen much evil and inconvenience in y^e self where: I would not pass the bounds, or go beyond the line of my calling

calling and commission from Jesus Christ. *Traſſent Fabryſia Fabri.*

Moreover, I have conſidered (as a Diſcouragement from attempting any thing in this kind) that I am much a ſtranger to the Spirits, and Principles, and Practices of men in this Country, and greatly unacquainted with the ſtate of affairs among you, and that it is no eaſie matter to gain thorough and certain Information. And that good caution alſo came to

minde, as a ſeaſonable memento, *Ζῆλος ὧν, ἀπράγμων ἴσθι* a *Stranger muſt be no needleſſ medlar.* I conſidered alſo, that where men are in a divided poſture, and their hearts are hot within them, there is ſmall hope of doing any good. To what purpoſe is it to charm deaf Adders? ſuch are men uſually that are addicted to ſides and parties: they are deaf on one ſide, and cannot hear of that ear. If a man had the meekneſſ and gravity, and Fatherly ſpirit and affection that *Moses* diſcovers in the Book of *Deuteronomie*, the Wiſdome and Reason of *Solomon* or *Paul*, the Tongue and Eloquence of *Iſaiab*, the beſt accompliſhments of any Son of *Adam*: yet it would in reaſon ſignifie little, where he hath to do with the ignorance, the pride, the perverſeneſſ, the conceitedneſſ, the prejudices, the opinionativeneſſ of engaged men. Many good men, though in

no good frame, are too like him in the Comedy, that ſaid *οὐ πείσεις ὕδ' ὅτι πείσῃς* *Ariſtoph. Plut.* *Thou ſhalt not perſwade me, no, though thou doſt perſwade me.* I conſidered alſo that things are run much to ruine among us, and gone beyond man, (the counſel and help of man) and that it muſt be

Θεὸς ἀπὸ μὲν χαρῆς God alone in ſome more then ordinary way of working that can retrieve the Inter-eſt of Chriſt among us, and reduce us again. Probable it is, that it muſt be ſome ſharp affliction, ſome ſmarting rod, or ſore tryal that muſt come upon theſe Churches to reduce them generally to their old trembling frame of ſpirit at the Word of God, and humble ſubmiſſion to the diſpenſation of it: And there is great reaſon to conceive that many Profeſſors may be grown Sermon-proof, that we had as good preach to the Heavens and Earth, and direct our diſcourſe to the Walls and Seats and Pillars of the meeting houſe, and ſay, Hear, O ye Walls, give ear O ye Seats and Pillars, as to many men in theſe Churches, that are deaf to all that is cried in their ears by the Lords Meſſengers, and are indeed like Rocks in the Sea, not to be ſtirred and moved by the beating and daſhing of theſe waters of the Sanctuary, or by the ſtrongeſt gult of rational and affectionate diſcourſe that can blow upon them. I conſidered alſo that there may be too many, even in the Boſome of New-Engliſh Churches that have lived long in that great ſin of confronting the

the faithfull Ministers of Christ, and gloried in their Rebellion against the Authority of Christ in his Churches, and plausibly, but fallily called it, an asserting of their *Liberties*, and Defence of the *Priviledge* of the *Brethren*, and that do even religiously despise and deride those that oppose their darling *Notions*: and be that rebuketh a scorner, getteth himself a *Blow*. It may be justly feared, that it is all the Religion some men have, to vilifie, and traduce, and low'r the reputation and Authority of the Ministers of Christ. Time was, when the Messengers of Christ, the *Masters of Assemblies*, were precious and welcome, (even when they came with a Rod, as Paul speakes, 1 Cor. 4. 21.) and their Feet beautifull and their words very acceptable, yea, were as Goads and Nails that made great Impression, and took fast hold in the hearts of hearers, and were greatly heeded on subh an occasion as this. But now they are become the *Enemies* of some men, because they tell them the Truth. Too many professors are like *Ezekiels* hearers, that were still talking against him by the walls & in the doors of their houses, even then when they would come and sit before him, & hear his words as coming forth from the Lord, and it was as a lovely Song, and a pleasant fit of musick to them, Ezek. 33. 30, 31, 32. I considered also that it is a matter of some difficulty, a dangerous undertaking, to search the wounds of this poor Country, lest instead of Help and Healing, they should be but the more enflamed, irritated and exasperated thereby.

However having this opportunity, unsought and undesired by me, nay thrust upon me, I shall adventure (as God shall assist) to speak something to the present case and condition of the Country: If weakly and unadvisedly in any respect, I beg pardon of God and of his People; And if the Lord help to any words of wisdom; I know wisdom will be justified of its Children, whoever condemn it, and I shall deliver my own soul, and express my compassion to the souls of others, and my faithfulness to the Interest of Christ in *New-England*, and those that will not hear shall be inexcusable. The condition of Affairs at this juncture calls for something. — *In magnis voluisse sat est*. I beseech you lend me a patient and unprejudiced ear. I design not the grieving or gratifying of any party, but the faithful discharge of my duty, according to the known practice, and laudable example of the worthy Servants of the Lord before me (some of whom are yet with us, and others fallen asleep in Jesus) on the like occasion.

That which I have to commend to you, and entreat of you (even in the bowels of Jesus Christ) is, the understanding, serious consideration of the last
end

end of your unsuitable and unbecoming deportments before the Lord; in this good Land which he hath graciously given you. And because general Discourses affect and edifie little, I crave leave here to instance in some particulars, that I may the better accomodate and direct you in the management of this Important Duty of *considering your latter end*. Therefore,

1. Consider what will be the latter end of that great decay of the power and practise of Godliness that is but too visible among us. Are not even many old Disciples, Professors of a long standing, that for a long time have been accustomed to the yoke of Religion, grown weary and drowsie, and next unto formal and customary in their performances? Though they do not possibly, make any notorious and scandalous Digression and Diversion from the good wayes of God, but are drudging and plodding on in a visible regular course of Obedience and Profession: yet behold, *is not a weariness* is it? They are not diligent and active to stir up themselves to take hold of God, and work out their own salvation, and forgetting the things that are behind, to press towards the mark, and to pursue and prosecute and reach forth unto these and those Christian excellencies which are before them. How few watch and keep their garments, and gird up the loins of their minds, that walk and are not faint, run, and are not weary in the wayes of God? Not but that there are yet (through the great mercy of God) many, very many living, thriving, waking, powerful Christians among us, that have another spirit, and follow God fully (as Caleb did, Numb. 14. 24.) whose souls follow hard after God (as he speaks, Psa. 63. 8) and that walk with him with much exactness, according to the tenour of the Covenant, with whom the Lord is well pleased, and for whose sakes it fares the better with us at this day. But what shall we say of the Body of Professors among us? Are they not grown customary, formal, supercineriary, lukewarm, neither hot nor cold? and what can be expected but that the Lord Jesus should grow sick of us, and spue us out of his mouth, as he threatened the Church of Laodicea, Rev. 3. 16, He that remembers the good old Spirit of Those that followed God into this wilderness; the Faith, the Fervency, the Zeal for God, the good Affection to his Ordinances, the dear love to his Messengers the Heavenly-mindedness, the Diligence in working out their own Salvation, and watching over their Hearts and Tongues and Conversations, that practical Piety, and power of Godliness, when the Kingdom of Heaven suffered violence, and Religion was the great buisiness, and All in a manner, of such as had given up their Names to God, and subscribed with their hands unto the Lord: cannot but easily discern a sad alteration of the state of things among Professors, that much of our silver

is become dross, and our wine mixed with water, and that the Daughter of Sion hath contracted filth that had need be purged away. Oh where is that Sense of the evil of sin? that Dread of the Majesty and Terror of the Lord? that Fear of the wrath to come? that care and vigorous endeavour to secure an happy condition in the next World? where are those fervent Prayers, unutterable groans, invincible wrestlings with God? that serious and frequent meditation, that trembling at the Word, making haste and not delaying to keep the Commandments of God? are not the wise (as well as foolish) Virgins slumbering and sleeping? As the Spouse saith, I sleep but my heart waketh, Cant 5.2. They are in a great measure oppressed and overborn with security: And others fast asleep; their eyes closed, and hearts asleep too. Hence so many Dreaming Professors among us. Do not men too generally turn Religion into a Formality and keep up a gaudy pageant of Religion in a course of Profession, that hath no life nor soul in it?

Professors do not walk *ἀκριβῶς* with that accurateness and circumspection that they were wont to do: but are grown careless and sleepy because the Bridegroom tarryeth, and wax weary of well-doing, and suffer their love to grow cold, and stumble at such stones as are commonly laid in the way of a long profession? do not some of them begin to eat with the gluttonious, and drink with the drunken, and smite their fellow-servants, because their Lord delays his coming? verily the hearts of men generally are not lifted up in the way of the Lord, 2 Chron. 17.6. nor engaged thoroughly to seek after him, but they walk at all adventures with him, Levit. 26.21. And there are a Generation of heedless Professors among us, that take no heed to walk in the Law of the Lord with all their hearts; which was the Character and Brand of Iehu, for all his high profession of Zeal for the Lord of Hosts, 2 King. 10.31. what settling and thickning upon the lees of security and sensuality, sloth and ease, doth the Lord Jesus observe among us, that searcheth Jerusalem with Candles? Zeph. 1.12. what a deal of Dross cleaving to men doth He take notice of, whose fire is in Sion, and furnace in Jerusalem? Here is much precious wheat but what a deal of Chaff will be found, when Christ comes to sift, and winnow, and purge his floor thoroughly? When the Apostle gives us the Character of those last and perilous times that should overtake the Church of God, he reckons up sundry evils that too many Professors in those dayes should be addicted to: And I wish his prediction were not verified among us in all the particulars of it. Men (saith he) shall be lovers of themselves (pursuing their own interest with the neglect of the good of others) Covetous, or Lovers of Money, Boasters (insolent and vain-glorious), Proud (supercilious, vaunting

vaunting or flaunting Professors) *Blasphemers* (scurrilous and abusive revilers of others) *Disobedient to Parents* (that is, Despisers of the lawful Authority not only of natural Parents, but of Civil and Ecclesiastical Rulers, and of superiours in all Societies, Families, Churches, Commonwealth, *Unthankful* (that are not to be won by any kind of cares, but are ungrateful to men of worth and usefulness, that have obliged them by all manner of Civilities and Services) *Unholy, or Profane spirited men, without natural Affection, Truce-breakers or Perfidious* (that make no Conscience of words and covenants, but violate their promises and engagements) *False Accusers* (Devils, the Original word is or Make bates and Calumniators) *Incontinent or intemperate* (that are buried in flesh and drowned in sensuality) *Fierce* (men of savage and brutish dispositions that will admit of no moderation) *Despisers of those that are good*, (such as cannot love good men but despise them, be they Magistrates or Ministers, men of Piety and great Worth) *Traitors* (perfidious to the cause and interest of Christ, to their best friends that repose confidence in them) *Heady* (violent men that are not to be check'd and restrain'd by Reason or Conscience within any bounds of sobriety, but are precipitately carried on, as their blind affections and passions hurry them) *High-minded* (they are Lords and Reign as Kings, and have an high Opinion of themselves, an overweening conceit of their own excellencies) *Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God* (preferring their own carnal pleasures before the holy will of God) And the Close of all is; *Having a Form* (a shew, appearance or vizard) *of Godliness but denying the power thereof*. I need say nothing more by way of Application: only mind that the Apostles Exhortation is, *from such turn away*, 1 Tim. 3. 1 - 6. And therefore we may well conclude, that Jesus Christ will turn away from them, and have no pleasure in them. This, this is the sad Apostacy that many in New-England are guilty of. A visible decay of, and declension from the practise of piety and power of Godliness seizing upon a very considerable part of the professing party of these Plantations, as to personal holiness and zeal for the precious interest of Jesus Christ among us. An *Hour of Temptation* is come upon us, the desperate effects and issues whereof are plainly seen in the Decay of Love, the subversion of the Faith, and partial or total Apostacy of many persons. Our vain janglings, and contentions, and strifes, and debates (those *Suckers* that draw away all the nourishment from the substantial parts of godliness) are an evidence that we are grown carnal, that once were a spiritual people, 1 Cor. 3. 3. We have many fearful instances, tremendous Examples of backsliding: so that the goodly pro-

Effusion of many persons expires in sad revolt from the Truth to vile Opinions, or from the power of godliness to loose and licentious courses. I have against thee, much against thee, may Christ say to *New-England*, as he said to *Ephesus*, Rev. 2. 4 *because thou hast left thy first love.* And what will be the *Latter end* of this, but the removing of our Candlesticks, the loss of the presence and favour of Christ, the departure of the Glory of the Lord from us, the casting away of the Salt that hath lost its savour?

2. Consider what will be the latter end of the great contempt of and unfruitfulness under the Dispensation of the Word and Ordinances among us. Did not your own Consciences tell you, that the Market and Price of Ordinances is very low at this day? Houses and Lands, Lots and Farms, and outward accommodations are of more value with many people, than the Gospel and Gospel ordinances. When the Ark of God was taken, it was the sad lamentation of that good Woman, *the Glory is departed from Israel:* and she named her Son *Isabod*, that is, *where is the glory?* 1 Sam. 4. 21. 22. As if she had said, you tell me of the Birth of a Son; but where is the Glory of Israel? you shew me a Son indeed, but can you shew me the Glory? no alas! *the Glory is departed from Israel, for the Ark of God is taken.* The Ark of God was the glory in her eyes. But how many among us are there to whom Flocks, and Herds, and Earthly Enjoyments are Glory? (as they were to *Laban's* Sons, Gen. 31. 1.) rather than the Ark of God's presence and his Holy Ordinances? where is that love to the Word, that affection to Sacraments, that longing for Sabbaths and Lecture dayes, that holy care to prepare for a meeting with God at such times, and to improve them, that was wont to be among us? Oh that old love, and zeal, and affection to the Ordinances and Messengers of Christ, though it abide (tho' blesse I be God) with some still, is much abated and lost, as to the generality of Professors in this Country. How Beautiful have the Feet of those that brought the Glad tidings of the Gospel been? but now how burdensome? that Ministers are reckoned Bills of Charges, and were it not for shame, I doubt some people could be well enough without them, or would entertain and set up any piece of ignorance and confidence (that would be cheap enough) to dispense the Oracles of God, and the Holy Mysteries of Religion unto them, rather than to bear the charge to procure and provide for men of Worth and Ability. This very thing would make one fear that *New-England* hath seen its best dayes: no is it to be wondred at, if this undervaluation of the Ordinances of God be attended with great unfruitfulness. Oh what barren Figs trees stand in this vineyard of the Lord? How much of the

the Earth here drinks in the rain of Heaven that comes oft upon it; and brings forth nothing but briars and thorns? what will the end of this be, but the cutting down of such cumberfome Professors, and the burning them up. Luk. 13. 7. 8. Heb. 6. 8. If men like the deaf Adder, shall stop their Ears, and will not hearken to the voice of the wisest Charmers. Psal. 58. 5. Doubtless God will send Serpents and Cockatrices among them which will not be charmed and they shall bite them and make those feel that would not hear. Jer. 8. 17. It was the Critical Sin of the Jews, that they refused to hearken to the Word of God; pulled away the shoulder, stopp'd their Ears, made their hearts as an Adamant, lest they should hear the Law, and the words which the Lord sent in his Spirit by the Prophets: And what was the latter end of it? why, therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of Hosts; And as he cried & they would not hear; so they cried, and he would not hear, but scattered them with a whirlwind among the Nations: and thus they laid their pleasant land desolate. Zech. 7. 11, 12, 13, 14. God, that, out of gracious respect to your Fathers and Predecessors that were a willing and obedient people; turned this wilderness into a pleasant fruitful land, can in severe wrath for your contempt of his Word and messengers, turn this land into a wilderness again. It is one of the praise-worthy performances of God to make such Metamorphoses & Alterations. Psal. 107. 33, 34, &c. If he call and you refuse to hearken, if he stretch out his Hand, and you regard not, he knows how to laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind. Prov. 1. 24, 25, &c. yea, & to be deaf to all your calls and cries in the Day of your distress & anguish. Would it be strange if those that will not hear the voice of the Lords Prophets should be constrained to hear the voice of Oppressors, or of Prophets that should speak Lies in the Lords Name, and are Prophets of the deceit of their own hearts? God may justly give you Pastors not after his own heart, but after your own hearts; which is a dreadful judgement: what can you expect but to have such Pastors as are described Jer. 23. beginn. Ezek. 34. beginn. He will make a Famine of his Word, or smite you with penal judgements, that you shall see and not see or see your selves into Blindness, and bear away your hearing Ear, be a people past Counsel and Instruction, and contrait that woful deafness, which is sometimes gotten by hearing of Sermons, and is most incurable and deplorable. Verily God will revenge (in some way that will make the hearts of men sore) the quarrel of his despised Word and Ordinances, if thus sinners full frame be not timely repented of. There are few (I am afraid) in comparison that tremble at the Word of God. Men are too proud, and high and full acknowledging and good in their own Apprehensions, to stand trem-

ing in the presence of God, and humbly to receive their *Doom and Sentence* from the Lord. They come now as *Judges* of the *Worn*, and not to have the *secrets of their hearts opened*, their *Cases scanned*, and the *state of their souls judged* by it: yea, as *Criticks*, to censure and quarrel, and find fault with it. God will look (with a look of favour and gracious aspect) to them that *tremble at his Word*. Isa. 66. 2. But with such a look as he cast upon the Egyptians through the black and dark side of the cloud on all the *proud men* among us, as those are called that disobeyed the voice of the Lord by *Jeremiab*. Jer. 43. 2. At this door came in the great calamity that befel the Jews in their seventy years captivity. The Lord God of their *Fathers* sent to them by his *Messengers*, rising up *betimes* and *in the night*, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place: but they, *mocked the messengers of God*, and *despised his words* and *amused his Prophets*, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was *no remedy*, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. Verily God will not fail to vindicate the Honour of his *deputed and abuled Messengers and Ordinances*.

3. Consider what will be the *latter End* of that *Worldliness* that is among us. Would not that great *Apostle Paul*, if he were here tell you, even *weeping*, that many of you mind *earthly things*? Phi. 3. 19. Is not this an *Epide-mical disease* of *New-England*? the *Strain*, the *Growth*, the *Spirit* of many *Professors* among us? Hence *general calling neglected*, the work of Religion goes on heavily, the strength and spirits of men are *exhausted*, or laid out on other things, and they have no heart to *do* work, to *family duties*, which are neglected, or *slubbered* and *poised over* *thamefully*. Hence great *Contentions* about little things, *three-penny matters* and a little *spark kindles a great fire*. Hence *grievous opposition*, a *sin* that was *notorious* in *Israel and Judah*, and contributed remarkably to their *Calamity*. And are there not sad complaints of this in *New-England*? and are they altogether without cause? may not any man that observes what *Gripping*, and *Squeezing*, and *Grinding the Faces* of the poor, and *Greediness* there is among us, fear it? Hence a *private selfish spirit*; that works of *Charity and Beneficence*, and of *Publick concernment* are neglected to the damage of the *publick* and *disgrace* of Religion. Hence no progress in a *Course of Piety*, no getting onward in the *Journey to Heaven*; You have men now, where they were *twenty years ago*: For they are *sunk and stuck fast* in the *mire and clay* of this present world, & cannot stir: There is much *thorny ground* in this Country, and the *Seed of the Word is choked*, and the *springing* of any good in their *Souls* is checked and hindered by the *cares of the World*, *deceitfulness of Riches* and *lusts of*
 other

other things. There is so much rooting in the Earth, that there is little growing upward, Heavenward, I mean: men are coupling both Worlds together (as one speaks) that they may drive them both before them. Certain it is that such mens hands will never be lifted up to any singular enterprizes and Atchievements for God, and the good of the Societies where they live. This is such a monstrous deportment of a Covenant people towards God, as might even transport Heaven and Earth into an Extasie of Admiration and astonishment. *Jer. 2. 12, 13.* Nothing being so portentous & prodigious in Nature, and beside the course of it, as that a people of so many mercies and such singular Engagements to the Lord, and of such wonderful experiences of the fruit of dependence upon God, should forsake God, the Fountain of all their comfort, and run for supply to empty, muddy pits, the perishing vanities of this World. *And what will the end be?* Those that get Riches and not by right (either in a way of Injustice, or Inordinacy) shall be like the partridge, never hatch the Eggs they sit on, or enjoy the good of their labours: but shall leave them in the midst of their dyes and be Fools to purpose at their end. *Jer. 17. 11.* They may heap up sin as the dust, but the innocent shall divide it, and prepare Raiment as the clay, but the just shall put it on, *Job 27. 16, 17.* Nay I am apt to think that the Unjust and Cruel and wicked one may plunder it away and possess it. yea, God will Tear away such Estates sooner or later, *Job. 20. 15.* It is seldome seen, that Estates gotten either injuriously, or over greedily prosper with posterity — *Vix gaudet tertius Hæres.* The third Heir hath scarce any joy of them. And truly the general end of this worldly spirit among us, is like to be this: that Church and Common-wealth will be neglected, all sink, and the Tree be chopt down, or fall, whilst men are busily building and feathering their several Nests in the Branches of it, unless the Lord shew mercy. Sad it is, that many good men have so far forgotten their great Errand into this Wilderness. Sure they were other and better Things the People of God came hither for, then the best Spot of Ground, the Richest Soil in the World, much more this Wilderness can afford. You would think, if the Land were full of Idols, and men were generally addicted to Idolatrous practises, that the Land were greatly defiled, and that God would lay all desolate. Truly Conscience is Idolatry in Gods account, *Eph. 5. 5.* And New England, notwithstanding the pure Administration of Gods Worship and Ordinances, is yet a Land full of Idolaters. This is for a Lamentation! What will the end of this be?

4. Consider what will be the latter end of that great Pride that is among us. Who doubts but, that Pride is a prevailing, spreading sin in New-

England.

England? Now pride expresseth it self variously. There is pride appearing in the Garb, in garish attire, in affected trimmings and adornings of the outward man, that Body of Clay that is going to the dust and worms. How are men and women garnishing those dithes, Bodies I mean, that must shortly be set upon the worms Table, for them to feed sweetly upon? Though this may seem a small matter: yet the *Holy Ghost* takes notice of the pride of gate and Garb. *Isa. 3. 16. 17. &c.* And of strange Apparel, for which the Lord threatens to punish the Princes and Kings Children (that one would have thought might have worn any Apparel, and swaggered at any Rate, *cum Privilegio*) *Zeph. 3. 8.* This kind of pride is very much unbecoming a people circumstanced as we are: a poor people in a wilderness condition. Hath God brought us into a wilderness, and caused us to dwell alone, and separated us for a *peculiar People* to himself, that we should imitate the Nations in these vanities? I know very well that there is a lawful use of Rich and Costly Apparel, of Beautiful Garments, of these and those Ornaments. To be clothed in Scarlet, and put on Ornaments of Gold was not unbecoming some of the Daughters of Israel, *2 Sam. 1. 24.* Nor am I so Severe, or Morose, as to exclaim against this or that Fashion, provided it carry nothing of Immodesty in it, or Contrariety to the Rules of Moral Honesty. The civil Customs of the place where we live is that which must regulate in this case. But when persons spend more time in trimming their Bodies than their Souls, that you may say of them (as a Worthy Divine wittily speaks) that they are like the *Cinnamon Tree*, nothing good but the Bark: When they go beyond what their State and Condition will allow, that they are necessitated to run into Debt, and neglect works of mercy and charity, or exact upon others in their dealings, that they may maintain their Port and Garb; or when they exceed their Rank and Degree (whereas one end of Apparel is to distinguish and put a difference between persons according to their Places and Conditions) and when the Sons and Daughters of *Sion* are proud and haughty in their Carriage and Attire in an humbling time, when the Church is brought low, *Ierusalem* and *Judah* is in a Ruinous Condition, and the Lord calls to deep Humiliation: This is very displeasing to God, and both Scripture and Reason condemn it. These are the most gross, and fantastical, and foolish buddings of Pride. But that which I principally intend, is more spiritual and less observed: A Fond and Foolish Admiration of Self, Pride of Parts, Gifts, Graces, Priviledges, Haughtiness because of Gods Holy Mountaine, any Over-weening conceit of a mans self, because of any thing that God hath conferred upon him. This is a close and

and secret evil, bred in the bone, in some cases not easily discerned or discovered, said y^e mortified, and occasions a great deal of trouble in Churches and other Societies. Hence men rise up against the order that is established according to God, and rebel against the Authority that is set up in Church and Commonwealth. Men have great Apprehensions of their own Wildome, and Grace, and Abilities, and Fittness to Rule and Order every thing (though it is their place to be ruled) and nothing is well done if they be not at one end of it. Factionous men are Proud men, Self admiring men: they look on themselves through their own magnifying Glass, and admire that every body doth not admire them, and wonder that all the World doth not wonder after them (as it is said, *They did after the Beast when his Deadly Wound was healed* Rev. 13 3.) and that all the Sheaves in the Field about them do not fall down and make obeysance to their Sheaves. Such men are in their own apprehension, good enough to rule, and too good to obey: and can pick holes and find as many faults with our Rulers in the management of Civil and Ecclesiastical affairs, as the mutinous *Isaiah* with *Moses and Aaron*, or proud *Absholom* with his Father *David* in his Government. Hence men are rebellious against the Word of God, and the voice of his Messengers. The proud men would not hearken to the *Prophet*, Jer. 43. 2. Hence also Men are stiff in their Opinions, and confident in their persuasions even about things of doubtful Disputation, to such a degree that they cannot bear with any that do not comport with them in their Apprehensions: And if they have imbibed this or that *Heterodox Opinion*, that is never so much against the sense of the generality of Gods People, Wise and Judicious; yet they hold it fast, and will not let it go: but will rather separate from Churches, part with the communion of saints, lose their interest in Ordinances, yea, break all Order, and hurl ad into a disturbance and confusion, then lay down the *Darling notions* they have taken up. Hence men carry it as though they were infallible, they cannot be in an error, and impecable too. They cannot be in a fault. Hence mens hearts rise and swell against faithful Admonitors, and they must not be reprov'd or contradicted. Hence men contend eagerly for disputable things, so as to impose their belief on other men, and make their Apprehensions the Measure and standard of theirs, and conformity to them therein, the condition of their Communion with them: whereas *Humility* would teach *Placidissima contra sententia*, and *Moderation and Forbearance* in such cases, without which there will be justling and endless contention. Only by pride comes contention, Pro. 13. 20. There are many occasions of Contentions: But *Pride*, if there were nothing

thing else, would occasion and produce Variance and Contentions. And what will the latter end be? Why, Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty Spirit before a fall, Prov. 16. 18. If this be the general sin of this Country, we may well fear that destruction is coming, and that we are in a tottering, ruinous, falling Condition, Pride hath budded, the Rod hath Blossomed, Ezek. 7. 10. Unless this Pride be nipped in the Bud, it will certainly thrust forth the Blossome of a Rod. God hath smart Rods for the back of a proud People.

5. Consider what will be the latter End of those bitter Contentions, and unchristian Distances and Divisions among us. All sober and considerate wise men have great thoughts of Heart about them. Sad it is, if there should be Contentions and Divisions, sides and parties and factions in Courts and Churches, and almost all Societies amongst us. This is very much unbefitting a people in our circumstances: Embarked in, and exiles for, the same cause and interest in this wilderness. And that which renders it more sad is, that the Contentions which are among us are not merely sudden exacerbations or ebullitions of anger and passion occasioned by these or those emergencies; but that there seems to be a Froward & perverse spirit mingled among us: which was the judgment of God upon the Egyptians before their destruction, Isa. 19. 14. May not the Lord charge us as he did the Israelites, Deut. 32. 5, 20. that we have too much of the spirit of that brooked and perverse Generation, even in this respect? Hence good Counsels are defeated, & all manner of Good almost obstructed in these 22 those Societies. And these contentions are not only as a paroxysm, and fit up a Fever, that spends itself and goes off in a little time: but like a Chronical distemper, they are perpetuated, and drawn out from year to year, and there is no end of them. Either they refuse healing, and are the more Exasperated by the best means that can be administered by the ablest hands: or admit only of a palliative cure that doth not eradicate the disease, but give some check to it, and yield present relief, and leave the patient in continuall danger of Relapvation, or relapsing (with less hope of recovery) into the same Distemper again. We abhor and punish (either justly) Adultery, Witchcraft, Murders, and such like abominations: but do we not make too little conscience of Hatred, Variance, Wrath, Strife, Emulations, Sedition, or Siding, which are all works of the flesh also, and so be abandoned? God, I say, would is a lamentable thing, that we should be thus divided and divided, when Herod and Pilate can make themselves friends in the order to the crucifying of Christ in his interest and Adversaries, and the enemies of the Church of God, though of very differ-

ent Interests and Apprehensions in many things can cement and unite and combine to subvert the visible Kingdom of Christ upon Earth. When Gaba and Ammon and Amalek, the Philistines with the Inhabitants of Tyre can consult together with one consent, and are confederate against the Church of God; when the League and Combination of the Anti Christian party in the World against the Interest of Christ is so evident; their Advantages so great, their Successes so notorious, their Rage such as reacheth up unto Heaven: Then for a professing people to be contending and quarrelling, biting and devouring one another is most unreasonable, most unreasonabie. Your differences will make way for those that will make no difference between Synodists and Antisyndodists, Old or New-Church men, Tros, Tyriusve illis nullo discrimine agetur.

The Hatred of your Adversaries is not derived upon you as you are thus & thus distinguished and diversified among your selves: but upon one common account. The Enmity of the seed of the Serpent is against One and all of the seed of the Woman, of what Complexion soever they are; and their Hatred is *ἡ πρὸς τὸ Γένος* against the whole Race and Generation of Religions and Reforming professors among us. These Divisions will open a wide door to your Adversaries. Those that let out these waters of strife and fill their streames with bitterness; that kindle these flames and encrease them, or hinder the quenching of them, do thereby gratifie them, exceedingly that wish ill to our Zion.

Hoc Ithacus velit, & magno mercentur Atrida.

And indeed it would be very strange, if the Industrious and indefatigable *esuites* (that compass Sea and Land to do mischief) and other sly, and subtile and malignant Enemies should not Improve and Graffe upon the Stock of our Divisions.

Our Contentions render us weak and despicable, and obnoxious to great Danger; they make us hang loose one from another, and from the general interest of Religion and civil Liberty, and render us like Fig trees with the first ripe Figs, which if they be shaken will even fall into the mouth of the eater, Nah. 3. 12. Yea, they do as it were, Arm our Adversaries against us; and in a manner tempt them to set upon us. A Mutinous Army and a Divided People are easily made a prey to their Enemies. Scripture, Reason and Experience attest unto the truth of what I say. Again, well it is, if whilst we are contending about the preservation of the purity of Churches, and Church Administrations, we are not laying a foundation for the corruption of them: and that our Contentions and Divisions (which naturally lead men in policie to endeavour the enlarging of their

their respective interests.) do not make more Church-members, then the conviction or evidence of their fitness for such a privilege. May not that be the issue of these differences, that Adherence to a party, or to be a Darling of the Faction, will become as passant a Qualification with this or that party or Faction for admission into the Church of God, as visible Sainthood hath been among us? And that, *Who are you for*, will be in reality the only *Test and Touchstone* of the sufficiency of persons for Communion with us in Church ordinances? Nay further, as I remember it hath been said of Lawyers, and too much verified in the men of that profession, that *Contention maintains them*, and they maintain *Contention*: so may it not be truly said of many men in Churches (that have few commendable Qualities in them, whether you consider them as men or Christians) that *Contention* maintains them in Credit and Reputation with their party: and they maintain *Contention* in heart and vigour among us? This is the way whereby some men (that are men of no remark for the practice of Piety, or real Worth and Abilities in any respect) do signalize themselves with their Brethren in *Contention*: even by floating upon the top of these waters of strife, and appearing with the foremost in the Defence of the Divided, narrow Interest of this or that party amongst us. Moreover it is a very great provocation to the God of peace, that you should strive and contend, judge and despise one another, and fall out so unreasonably about lesser matters, and such things as are foreign to the Bond of Christian-Communion. When you should be blessing God that you agree so far, you are wrangling because that you disagree a little: when you should thank God that you agree so much, you quarrel because you agree no more. Certainly God is displeased, Christ dishonoured, Religion (as to the Course and Race, Reputation or Glory of it, *2 Thess. 3. 1.*) Disadvantaged, Malicious Enemies Encouraged, the World Offended, the Rising Generation, and your own Souls unspeakably prejudiced by these Divisions. And what will the End be? It is commonly observed by those that are conversant in Ecclesiastical Histories, that in the *Primitive times*, when the Churches had Peace and Rest, and Respiration from the heat of Persecution, they soon grew Quarrelsome and Contentious: And then God in a little time raised up some Persecutor or other to chastise them for their faults in that kind, and whip them together again: and then, SEE (could their Enemies say) how these Christians love one another! the contentions of Gods people in times of liberty make way for Persecution or some dismal Calamity. The Divisions among us (some whereof seem to admit no Help or Healing, but are rather heightened and exasperated

by the best Applications) are in my eye like any Comet, or Blazing Star, or prodigious Apparition, direfully portending woful Calamities. What the *Latter End* will be, our Saviour hath told us, *Mat. 12. 25. Every Kingdome divided against it self is brought to Desolation: and every City or House divided against it self shall not stand.* Divisions are sad presages of misery, and lead the way to dreadful Desolations.

6 Consider what will be the *latter end* of your unreasonable jealousies, abusive calumnies, or other ill Usage of persons of great worth, use and Interest; among you. Consider (I beseech you) in the fear of God, what will be the end of the ill entertainment of the best men among you. Who sees not (that is not wofully blind) that no men are more suspected and taken up in the lips of talkers. *Ezek. 36. 3.* calumniated and abused, then pious and faithful Magistrates and Ministers? *Moses* and *Aaron* of old, as *Meek* and *Humble* and *Faithful* and *Innocent* as they were, yet were suspected and traduced by many Male Contents in *Israel*: You take too much upon you. *Numb. 16. 3.* Good *Moses* must still bear the murmurings of that discontented, unruly people. If the Lord cross them in denying them any thing they wanted or lusted after, *Moses* presently must pay for it. If they wanted flesh or water, then presently they fly out against *Moses*; *We may thank you, Moses, for this: would God we had stayed by the flesh-Pots in Egypt and dyed there; have you brought us into this wilderness to starve us to death, and kill us with hunger?* *Exod. 16. 3.* And if the Lord vindicate the cause of *Moses* and *Aaron* against any Rebels among them, and destroy them in such a miraculous and extraordinary manner, that one would have thought it should have for ever silenced all their murmurings, and taught the survivors submission to the Authority of God vested in *Moses* and *Aaron*, yet soon after, the very next morning, in cold blood, as it were, they are making head against them again, and charging them with the murder of their Brethren: *Ye have killed the people of the Lord.* *Numb. 26. 41.* It is the hard condition of Magistrates and Ministers, that they must bear all the murmurings of discontented people, and be loaded with all the obloquies and injurious reproaches that can be. They had need be men of great meekness and patience, able to bear much, that are Pillars in the Church and Common-wealth. But great is the sin and unworthiness of those that put them to such an exercise of meekness and patience, And are not many among us guilty in this respect? It is a sad time when a lying Spirit is gone forth into the mouths of many Professors; when lyes are invented to the disparagement of Rulers, and Ministers, and calumnies and base Reproaches are vented and put off and dispersed

through the Countrey with much subtilty and industry, as if there were some *Lying Office* set up in *New England*. It hath been my observation since I came among you, that almost all the raucnet in this poor Countrey is made and carryed on by Lying. *Tale-bearer* or *Slanderer* in the Hebrew [*RACHIL*] hath its Origination from [*ROCHEL*] a word which signifies a Merchant, *quasi fama ac honoris p. oximi nundinator* (*Buxtorf*) one that lets to sale the name and honour of other men. We have many such Merchants, or Pedlars rather, that go up and down the Countrey with this kind of Commodity; and it is a lamentable thing that they should have so good a Trade of it, and meet with so many Chapmen that are ready to take their ware off their Hands. ----- *Hinc illa La-chrima!* There are many that walk with Lies and Slanders. *Ier. 9. 4.* I wish it were not too manifest that many men among us have the art of telling a Ly with a great deal of gravity and seriousness, and have gone to School to *Machiavel*, that instructs his Schoolars *calumnians fortiter*, to calumniate stoutly, and tells them for their encouragement, *Aliquid habebis*, something will stick. Many pregnant Instances of this evil Spirit might be produced to confirm what I say: but herein I shall spare the guilty. Only, who knows not (that is no stranger in our Israel) that the Ministers of Christ among you indefinitely have been deliberately and solemnly
 " charged with a *Declension from Primitive Foundation-work, Innovation*
 " *in Doctrine and Worship; Opinion and Practice, Invasion of the Rights,*
 " *Liberties and Priviledges of Churches, Usurpation of a Lordly Prelati-*
 " *cal Power over Gods Heritage, and with the like things which are the*
 " *Leaven, the corrupting Gangrene, the Infecting, spreading Plague, the*
 " *propping Images of jealousy set up before the Lov., the accursed thing*
 " *which hath provoked Divine wrath and further threatens Destruction?*
 I need give you no other instance of this evil Spirit of Jealousie and Calumny then this. Here is good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over. Enough and enough to demonstrate the distressed and embittered Spirit of some men; and what unkind usage from some hands, those your poor Ministers find among you. Such men (whom I wish either that they were better enformed and affected, or less considerable in the Common-wealth) impute all the *Blastings* and *Droughts* and *lignments* of God upon the Countrey to the Defection and Apostacy of their Ministers. As if the confident Accusers themselves were men of such unquestionable innocency, as not to contribute any thing to the Sins and Sorrows of the Countrey; or as if there were no other sinners among us that are kindling the wrath of God against the Land, and pulling down his Judgements,

but

but a few despised Ministers: Or as if there were no other sins against the Lord our God found among us, to provoke the wrath of a jealous God, but the supposed Deviations of pious, conscientious, learned men; truly studious of Truth and Reformation, and a due progress therein. Such Accusers of our Civil and Ecclesiastical Rulers, do in effect and by consequence (according to the just interpretation and construction of their words, without wringing blood from them) say thus much, *That it were happy for the People of New England if they were rid of such Leaders in Church and Common wealth.* *Tantane Animis caelestibus ira?* Strange! that any good men should be so far transported with passion or prejudice, as to cast fire-brands, Arrows and Death in this manner; and not to say, *are we not in sport?* but are we not in sober sadness, in Religious good earnest? There is a spirit of persecution in such men: they discover *Sanguinary* thoughts towards the Servants of Christ: For when they have *excommunicated* the Body of the Ministers, and found the accursed thing in their Tent, what should they do but stone them? when they have calumniated them to such a degree, and put them into such *Bear skins*: what should they do but *beat and worry* them? when they have represented them as *abominable Apostates*, and the *prime incendiaries* of Divine wrath: what should they do, but deal with them, as *Ανέμπατα καὶ κατὰ πρῶτον* particular and devoted persons that must be cut off by the hand of justice for the purging of the Land, and putting away evil from Israel? The Pagans of old attributed all their Deaths, and Plagues and Droughts, and unreasonable weather to the Christians that cohabited with them. Hence, if any evil befell them, they thought the Gods were angry with them, because of the toleration of the Christians among them: and therefore their out cry was, *Christianos ad Leones*, Away with the Christians to be devoured of the Lions. And truly such a notion as some have of the Ministers of Christ carries this in it, that it were expedient that they should be made a Sacrifice, and thrown to the Lions: but that some of you have in some places a severer way to punish some of them for their supposed Apostacy, viz. To keep them short in their maintenance, to distress them and their Families, or drive them to such shifts for a livelihood, as men of *Liberal Education* can hardly buckle to, or else to tire and weary them out with *vexatious contentions*. And betwixt it were for a man of Integrity to come under the Paw of a devouring Lion, that will devour him *mercifully* because *suddenly*; he will be stretched upon the Rack, and tortured to death with ill usage, or to live under the continual droppings of a contentious froward people, that will waste and wear him out by degrees.

Degree, ut sentiat se mori, as the Bloody Tyrant said, It is not very long since, upon occasion of the Defamation (as it is said) of one Minister among us, that 1 Ch. Rev. 19 5. *A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape,* was discoursed and improved. But would that we lay men of the persons that are guilty of the Defamation of the Ministers of the Country in general, that are no less Innocent than He was: What Advancement can be made for these men, and their Demerits? I will not say that it is revealed as mine Ear, by the Lord of Hosts, surely less aniquity, shall not be purged from them, till they ay: But this I will say, because I judge it enough amongb, that it is a grievous provocation, and cause for due and solemn Repentance, and other manner of satisfaction then yet hath been given..

But what wrong, on New England, have thy Magistrates, and Ministers done thee? For which of their good works are thou Stinging of them? Have they Prayed for thee? Have their Souls wept for thy Pride and Enbittis and Haraness of Heart, and Unrulership? Have they Watched over thee, in their several Capacities? Have they given thee Faithful Warning of approaching Calamities? Have they served thee with all their might, with very little advantage accruing to themselves in outward respects? Have they loved thee more then thou hast loved them? Brethren and Friends, forgive them I beseech you) this wrong. I confess I have used some sharpness in this Discourse: And I believe I have sufficient warrant for it. There are some that are to be

rebuked sharply; and they are the *Am Yisra*. The Cretians are always Liars. *This witness is true*, wherefore rebuke them sharply, or cuttingly, as the Original Word imports, Tit. 1. 12, 13. And the truth is, I look upon this practice of Reproaching and Framing your Leaders in both Orders, as greatly prejudicial to the prosperity of the Country, tending to the sowing and perpetuating of our Divisions, and rendering all our Hopes and Endeavours of Peace and Reconciliation frustrate and fruitless. As he said, *What peace, so long as the Whoredoms of thy mother dezzab, and her Witchcrafts, are so many.* 2 Kin 9 22. So may I say, what peace can be expected so long as this trade of Lying and calumniating men of piety worth and Authority is continued and driven on among us? And indeed though it may be thought by some that these wretched practises are but the small Devices of some petty Politicians and little creeping States-men among us that have no very considerable influence into our publick affairs: yet I must needs say, that I look upon this course of calumniating your best men, as the very Gun-powder-Plot that threatens the destruction of Church and State. Nothing (as experience shews) is more advantageous

to the designs of Innovators, then the right knack of kindling and fomenting jealousies and fears in the minds of men concerning Magistrates and Ministers. Such men are wont to make and improve false Alarms of danger, that people may believe that Religion and liberties are at the Stake, and in danger to be lost! Designers are wont to impose upon the credulitie and easiness of well meaning people this way. And that men are generally disposed to receive such Impressions, and suspect evil of their Superiors and Leaders, is but too manifest. Moreover these Calumnies are Immoralities, and scandalous evils, and it is the duty of Gods servants to lift up their voice as a Trumpet, to cry aloud and not spare them that are guilty, *whether the issue be*: yea, to cry to God and man for redress. And I would humbly commend it to our Honourable Rulers, upon whom the lot of this days Election shall fall, that they would take it into serious consideration and fixe upon some expedient, to put these lying lips to silence, and to find out the principal Authors and Fomentors of these mischievous calumnies. They are certainly moral evils, and God is angry with us for them, (for he is very tender of the name and reputation of pious Rulers and Ministers) and many good people are deceived and drawn in the simplicity of their hearts, into a disaffection to their Leaders; yea, and the people of God abroad are abused and misinformed, and these Calumnies (to my knowledge) are handed and transmitted over Sea; insomuch that many good people take it for granted that most of the Leaders in this Countrey are meditating a Revolt from the good old principles and practices of their worthy predecessors: And how prejudicial this is to this poor Countrey to lose their reputation and their Room and Interest in the hearts and prayers of the people of God abroad, I need not say: me thinks those things should be looked into. A Committee of enquiry or discovery might do well: for it is a matter of very threatening consequence. *Ob Consider what the end of these things will be.* It is sad when people are jealous of the best men they have, and those that are truest to their Interest, and when lies are disseminated, and base calumnies spread abroad, and must be believed against men of known piety and worth, and zeal, and Faithfulness. *What will the end be,* but that the Magistratical Office will go a begging, men of worth will be loth to appear on the Stage of Government, and wise men will say, make us not Rulers over this people, and that those that despise the waters of Shiloah that go softly, shall have the waters of the great River, strong and many, come up upon them. When a Spirit of Jealousie concerning Rulers is growing and spreading in any place, That there is a diffidence of the people in their Magistrates; it is an ill

Omens, a sad sign, portending some great Alteration in Church and State. When people are afraid of, and disaffected to their best Friend; that pity them, that pray for them, that mourn in secret for them, that watch for their good, and consult for their comfort, as to Soul, Body, Estate, and all their Concernments: It is a great evil, and greatly provoking to God. If men will be despising, and censuring, and reproaching, and abusing the Gods among them (as Magistrates are called) and the Angels of Churches (as Ministers are called) God can send Devils or Evil Angels among them to torment and terrifie them, I mean, unreasonable men to rule over them in a *Tyrannical way*: and then they will in vain wish that they had those again, whom they have thrust away from them. The end of these things will be, that you will weary Magistrates and Ministers, and break their hearts, and send them to their Graves, and God will take you into his own hands and walk contrary to you in fury, and cause those that hate you to rule over you. If you are jealous of those that are men of Worth and Integrity, that mean you good and no harms: It is just with God to give you Rulers and Ministers that shall be as bad to you indeed, as you injuriously fancy those you have to be; that shall really wrest away your liberties, oppress your Consciences, and bring in not *Presbyterianism*, but worse, and spread their hands upon all your pleasant enjoyments. Be Instructed O *New England*, be instructed; and know that this will be the *latter end* of thy unreasonable jealousies, Calumnies, & ill usage of thy Best men, if timely, nay speedy Repentance prevent it not.

7. Consider what will be *Latter end* of Receding, or making a *Defection* from the way of Church Government established among us. I profess I look upon the Discovery & Settlement of the *Congregational way* as the Boon, the *Gratuity*, the *Largess* of Divine bounty, which the Lord graciously bestowed upon his People, that followed him into this *Wilderness*: And a great part of the Blessing on the head of *Joseph*, and of them that were separate from their Brethren. Those good People that came over shewed more Love and Zeal and affectionate Desire of *Communion* with God in pure Worship and Ordinances, and did more in order to it, then others: and the Lord did more for them, then for any other people in the World, in showing them the pattern of his House, and the true scriptural way of Church Government and Administrations. I have often adored the wisdom, and goodness and Faithfulness of the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ* in this respect. God was certainly in a more then ordinary way of favour present with his Servants in the laying of our Foundations, and in settling the way of Church order according to the will and appointment

ment of Christ. If Things were to begin now, how many minds, and what discord would there be? But God shewed them the *Form and Fashion* of his House, as to all the substantials of it (for I do not think that they were at a *Ne plus ultra*, and that nothing was left to the discovery of after-times; but beginning-work was substantially done by them: They were set in the right way, wherein we are to proceed and make a progress) And he made them *unanimous* about it, and blessed what they did marvelously: It will be our *Wisdom, Interest, and Duty* to follow them, as they followed the *Guidance of the Spirit of Christ*. Oh consider what will be the sad issue of *Revolting* from the Way fixed upon, to one extreme, or to another, whether it be to *Presbyterianism* or *Brownism*. As for the *Presbyterians*, it must be acknowledged, that there are among them as *Pious, Sober, Learned, Orthodox men*, as the World affords; and that there is as much of the *Power of Godliness* among that party, and of the spirit of the good old *Paritan*, as among any People in the World. And for their Way of *Church-Government* it must be confessed that, in the day of it, it was a very considerable step to Reformation. The Church of God hath been recovered by degrees out of the *Antichristian Apostacy*. When our Lord Jesus wrought the Cure on that *Blind Man*, Mark 8. 23, 24, 25. He first *saw men as trees walking*, and then *saw every man clearly*. Great Blindness had happened to the World for many Ages, and the cure was performed by the *Hand of Christ* gradually, and to see men walking as *Trees*, to have any Glimmerings of Truth, was a good degree of Recovery, and a far greater mercy then to be stark blind, and should be so acknowledged. The *Reformation* in King *Edward's* dayes was then a blessed work: And the *Reformation* of *Geneva* and *Scotland* was a larger step, and in many respects purer then the other. And for my part I fully believe (the Reasons of which Belief cannot be rendred here) that the *Congregational way* far exceeds both, and is the highest step that hath been taken towards *Reformation*, and for the substance of it is the very way that was establihed and practised in the *Primitive times* according to the Institution of Jesus Christ. And indeed it hath been and is my persuasion from what I have read and observed, that those that will forsake the *Congregational* and pass over to the *Presbyterian way*, because of some differences of notion among our *Congregational Divines*, or difficulties in the practise and way of the *Congregational Churches*, shall find that they make but a bad exchange, and that there are as many or more Differences, Difficulties and Entanglements in the *Presbyterian Principles and Practise*. And I must needs say, that I should look upon it as a sad

degeneracy, if we should leave the good old way so far as to turn *Councils and Synods* into *Classes and Provincial Assemblies*, and there should be such a laxeness in Admission of Members to Communion as is pleaded for and practised by many *Presbyterians*, and Elders should manage all themselves in an *Autocratical, absolute way* to the utter Subversion or Overthrow of the liberty and privilege of the Brethren. Our Worthies that are gone off the Stage allowed the Privilege of the Brethren without any infringement of the Rule and Authority of the *Presbytery*, and knew how to reconcile them together. Whatever influence, the concurrence of the Brethren hath into Church Acts, clear it is that it is necessarily required to the exercise of Church Authority, that all Ordinances may be administered in a way of Edification. The Expressions of the deservedly Famous Dr. Owen are very considerable. "The Reason (saith he) why the consent of the Church is required unto the Authoritative Acting of the Elders therein, is not because from thence any Authority doth accrue unto them a new, which virtually and radically they had not before: but because by the Rule of the Gospel this is required to the orderly acting of their power, without which it would be contrary to Rule, and therefore ineffectual: as also it must needs be from the nature of the thing itself; for no act can take place in the Church without or against its own consent, whilst its Obedience is voluntary and of choice. And in case the Church refuse to consent to such Acts as are according to Rule, the Elders must instruct them in their Duty, declare to them the danger of Dissent, wait patiently for the concurrence of the Grace of God with their Ministry in giving Light and Obedience to the Church: and in case of the Churches continuance in any Failure of Duty, to seek for advice and counsel from the Elders and Brethren of other Churches. Thus that Man of Renown in his excellent Treatise of Worship and Discipline, Pag. 130, 131. If this be attended, the Congregational way is so far secured. I know there are many that are bold to Affirm, that the Ministers among us are generally revolted, or revolting to *Presbyterianism*. If I were perswaded that any such thing were done or designed, I should account it my duty with all due respect to give in my Testimony against it at this time. This indeed would be a real Degeneracy and Defection from a better way, that God hath by an High Hand of Providence set up among us, and signally owned and blessed. But I am fully perswaded, that such Representations of your Elders' (as to far the greatest part of them) are injurious, groundless Calumnies, which some men must answer for. It was candidly and truly said by that Reverend Servant of Christ (sufficiently known to be no Presbyterian)

tarian; that Preached on this solemn occasion two years ago, *that having*
some Eccentrics, we are all generally agreed in the Principles of Purity,
and Power of the Church, Mr. Oxenbridge his Election Sermon, pag.
45, that is, we are all generally Congregational men. And none will say
otherwise but those that have profit by the Fable. If the Doctrine of
Discipline drawn out of the Scriptures, and delivered to us in the Platform
as well as in the writings, of famous and blessed, Cotton, Hooker, Ma-
ther, Shepard, and the rest of our Worthies be Congregational.
 I doubt not but you have, for the substance of it, the hearty Consent of
 the most, if not all your Elders to it. I cannot find upon my utmost en-
 quiry, that there is any real Foundation for such Invidious Reports, or any
 thing that answers the great Cry which some make. Differences indeed
 there are among godly learned men about some Apices or less considerable
 particulars, and ever were among your Famous Leaders, and yet they
 walked sweetly together, and never branded one another with the
 name of Presbyterians. There is doubtless a Latitude in the Congregation-
 al Way, wherein good men may walk a Breadth: and Degrees do not va-
 ry the Species. And I am persuaded that if many of the Clamorous or loud
 Accusers of the Ministers of Christ would examine themselves Impartial-
 ly, the verdict of their own Conscience would be, that the Reason why
 they charge their Elders with Presbyterianism is, because they themselves
 are revolted to the other Extream, or never came up to the true Congre-
 gational way, as it is delineated by our Worthies out of the Scriptures. Else
 what do those mean that speak of the Rule and Government of the Church
 vested in the Brethren, of the Governing Vote of the Brethren, of a Mode-
 rator to be set up by the Brethren, when the Elders (that are Rulers in Force)
 are unsatisfied to put this or that to Vote, of allowing the Officer his single
 Vote, and no more? what means that disgust that some men have against
 the very Name of Rule and Authority (truly so called) in the Eldership;
 against Councils and Synods, and the decisive power thereof, as it hath
 been stated by the Leaders of the Congregational-way, both in Old and
 New-England? I will be bold to say, (and indeed there is no great hazard
 in the Assertion) that these notions are as opposite to the Principles of our
 Congregational Worthies, as darkness is to Light: Yea, they are the
 Reproach of the way of these Churches, which our Divines have industri-
 ously rolled off us. Those that laid our Foundations were directed of God,
 to steer a middle course between Rigid Presbyterianism and Levelling
 Brownism. There is a sweet Temperament in the Congregational way, that
 the liberties of the people may not be overlaid and oppressed, as in the

Classical way; for the *Rule and Authority of the Elders* rendered in insignificant thing, and trampled under Foot, as in the way of the *Brownists*; but that there may be a *Reconciliation or due Concurrence*, and a *Ballancing* of the one justly with the other. And herein the wisdom of our Lord Jesus in the Frame of Church Government (for it is not any *politick* and *prudential* Contrivance of man, but modelled by the great Law-giver, the Lord Jesus) is greatly to be admired by us: and those that have not seen & acknowledged this, never yet beheld the beauty and glory of the Congregational way. If *Puritanism* in the Rigour of it, should obtain among us, there will be an Oppression of the liberties of the people: If *Brownisme* be introduced, there will be a rising up & rebellion of the people against the Authority of Christ conferred on Church-Officers. Whether the Oppression of Church Guides, or Rebellion of Church-Members, be the greater Evil, I shall not concern myself to enquire. I beg that we may keep the Kings High way, the way that Christ himself hath cast up for us, and that our worthy Predecessors have travelled in before us: the way that hath been stated, not in the private models of some fancy full and conceited man, but in the Platform of Church Discipline (O that it were more generally received and attended!) and in the writings of our Ablest and most judicious Divines. The truest understanding of these things is from the Platform (deducted out of the Word of God) and the *Polemical* writings of our Blessed worthies. For men generally speak warily and accurately, when they have to do with Adversaries, and know they are like to answer and account with them for every expression that falls from them: whereas those very men in private are apt to take more Liberty, and are sometimes driven by necessity, and for peace sake to comply farther then they would. As those are necessities of State that Politicians are forced to comply with for avoiding of publick inconveniences: So there are also Church necessities, which Officers must concede unto for peace sake. I would much rather judge what is the true Congregational way in the judgement of our Divines from their writings, then by what was practised by them in this or that Congregation, where they might be necessitated to give way and comply (and that in Christian prudence with respect to peace and edification) to such Things as did not in every respect satisfy them. There were Sons of Zerviah that were too hard for wise and just and holy David (2 Sam. 3. 39.) And if he let them take their course sometimes, and things went not so well in the Government on that account, It argues Davids desire of peace and Davids necessity, not his judgement or Principles. In like manner it comes to pass through the *Stupidity* and *Misfulness* of

of some people, that cannot be contradicted in practice without hazard of peace; or the weakness of others who cannot bear what is every way right) that must be tenderly and gently dealt with, that Church Officers cannot in the course of their practice alwayes come up to their Principles. The unpreparedness of this or that people for a full *Scriptural Reformation* on many times is a great Clog and Remora to pious Rulers and Ministers that are vigorously pursuing it, 2 Chron. 10. 33. Labour therefore to inform your selves aright in this matter: and Consider what will be the sad end that will attend and follow a Revolt from the established way of Church Government among us.

8. Consider what will be the *Later End of Contempt of, weariness under, or Disaffection to the Civil Government established among us, whether as to the Constitution or Administration thereof.* When God hath so graciously settled us upon to good Foundations: now to kick and spurn at our Corner Stones, to be given to Change, & ready for Innovations and Alterations is great Ingratitude to God, and a very irreligious thing. For here (according to the Design of our Founders, and the Frame of things laid by them) the Interest of Righteousness in the Common wealth, and Holiness in the Churches are inseparable. The prosperity of Church and Common wealth are twisted together. Break one Cord, you weaken and break the other also. They are like *Hippocrates his Gemelli*, that *do ridere simul, & flere simul.* They that are weary of, and disaffected to this Government that God hath established among us, and shall betray and give up the Civil Interest of *New-England* will have more to answer for then they are aware of. He is a mad man that will hope for the Continuance of our Spiritual Liberties; If the Wall of our Civil Government be once broken down. Those Beasts that break down the Hedge of our Civil Government, do not do sign, or do it merely because they are angry with the Hedge, but because they would break in and devour all that is precious and dear to us. The change of our Government will inevitably introduce a sad change in our Churches. To divide what God hath conjoynd, viz. Civil and Ecclesiastical Liberties, to deliver up Civil, and yet hope to keep Spiritual Liberties, is folly in its Exaltation. I look upon this as a little model of the Glorious Kingdom of Christ on Earth. Christ Reigns among us in the Common wealth as well as in the Church, and hath his glorious Interest involved and wrapt up in the good of both Societies respectively. He that shall be Treacherous and Fleece to the Civil Government, as he is injurious highly to the present and succeeding Generations; So he is guilty of High Treason against the Lord Jesus, and will be proceeded against.

as a rebel and Traitor to the King of Kings, when he shall hold his great Affizes at the End of the world. And if there be any such Judas among us as have received their Sep, and are going forth to betray Jesus Christ (I mean the Interest of Christ here among us, with a kisse, subdulous pretences of love and good affection) or to force him (if need be) with swords & Raves? Let them know that they are hastning their own Ruine, & it had been better for them that they had never been born. Certainly they that long for a Change, or that would not do all that may be done, with a good Conscience, to prevent it, may have time enough to repent their Folly. I am no *states-man*, nor *Politician*; It is neither my Profession, nor Ambition: nor do I love to Discourse of things that I do not competently Grasp and Comprehend. Therefore I shall only say further: it hath been very sage Counsell that hath been often given you; *Keep to your PATENT*. Your Patent was a *Royal Grant* indeed, befitting a *Great Prince* to make, and that which our Worthies that are gone to rest have many a time blessed God for: and it is instrumentally your defence and security. Recede from that one way or other, and you will expose yourselves (for ought I know) to the Wrath of God, and Rage of Man. Fixe upon the *Patent*, and stand for the Liberties and Immunities conferred upon you therein, and you have God and the King with you, both a good Cause and a good Interest, and may with good Conscience set your Foot against any Foot of Pride and Violence that shall come against you. I shall only adde, that my Hearts Desire and Prayer is, that the *Estates* this Day may use their Priviledge well in chusing men fearing God, and duly Accomplished for Government, acquainted with the Worth & Glory of the Interest of Christ among us in Church and Common wealth; And that the Elected may have *εὐκαιρία βοηθίας*, suitable and seasonable Help and Grace to manage all affairs they are intrusted with to the Glory of God and good of this Plantation: And that the People under them may be so far from weariness of and Disaffection to the Government, that they may thankfully enjoy the sweet fruits of a good *Magistracy*, and that there may be a Covering or Defence upon all our Glory.

9. Consider what will be the Latter End of an inordinate Aff-*fection of Liberty*. I am farre from speaking against due care to maintain our Liberties. It is the property of *English-men*, much more of *Religious English-men*, and should be most of all of *Religious New English-men* to be renacious and tender of their Liberties. Religion doth so enoble and heighten the spirits of men, that a Christian, though he can be content to bear the Yoke and be in bondage, when God will have it so: yet he cannot wil-

willingly prostitute his Liberty, and basely enslave himself. *You are bought with a price, Be not servants of man* 1 Cor. 7. 23. Religious people will bear as long with Tyranny and Oppression as any people: but when God and Reason calls for it, they are wont to be as stout Assertors of their Liberties as any men. I am farre from condemning or perswading to Jealousies concerning men of piety and principles, that are sober and modest and conscientious Assertors of their Liberties. But I would dissuade from an extreme and undue affectation of Liberty. Here is a great Cry in the Countrey at this day about our Civil Liberties: these and those (in the frightful Imaginations of some men) are about to rob us of our Liberties. I doubt not but the Jealousy and complains (at least as to many of them that are thus censured) is utterly groundless. And therefore take heed what you do. *Out-cries* for Liberty are popular and plausible, & make a pleasant sound in the Ears of Injudicious and unexperienced persons: but to those that have been abroad in the World and observed, or acquainted themselves with the Histories of States and Kingdoms, nothing is more suspected. Commonly they that raise the loudest Out-Cry against Governors for Robbing the people of their Liberties, either design, or eventually prove to be the greatest Oppressors of them. When they come to be Masters. The World hath been long imposed upon, and accustomed to these Impostures, yet you are not old, nor wise enough (as to the generality of the Inhabitants of it) to be cautious in this matter and to repose confidence in those that they have experienced for Faithful Conductors before the pretended *Assertors and Conservators of their Liberties*. See saith *Absalom*, *thy matters are evil* but, *thou hast a very good cause*, that would admit a quick and easie dispatch: but my Father *David* is a careless man, and minds not the good of his Subjects, Thou maist wait long enough for justice to thy great charge and Trouble; for he hath deputed none to hear thee. *Oh that I were judge in the Land!* I would do every man justice without delay. He kissed and courted the people to get into the throne. 2 Sam. 15. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. But what do you think would that dissolute young man have been in the throne, for all his Courtships and flatteries? good *David* with all his partialities, injustices and infirmities, was farre better (and the deluded people would have found it so) then aspiring *Absalom* with all his Complements and fair promises. Nothing is more ordinary with Ambitious men in a Popular State then Affectation of Popularity, seeming Sympathizing with the people, and complaining of the Defection, Apostacy, and evil Intentions of their Governors. Take heed of such Imposters, though Religious in pretence and appearance, Acting all with

a *Theatrical Gravity*. When you have pious Rulers, of whose *Faithfulness* you have had experience, Do not easily suspect them. Verily none are more like to wrest away your Liberties, than those that make the greatest *Out-cries* for them; when there is no Reason, no greater *Engine* to *embarras* and *enslave* a people, than such *confused* *Out-cries* for Liberty. I would know them very well that I would trust in that Case. In *Popular States* the great danger is of a *Licentious*, *Passion*, *Un governable Spirit*, that kicks and spurns at *Authority*, and this makes way for *Anarchy* and *Confusion*, and that for *Tyranny*. For though it may seem a Paradox to some, yet it is an experienced Truth, that nothing makes way more for *Tyranny* and *Oppression*, than an undue Affection of Liberty. This certainly genders unto Bondage. Our Liberties are so sweet and precious, that its pity we should lose them by needless Jealousies and Murmurings, Unthankfulness to God and Men who have been the *Enfranchisers* and *Keepers* of them, or by catching at a shadow instead of the substance.

There are the same Out-cries in Churches also for their Liberties. And God forbid but that our Brethren should enjoy the Privilege and Liberty which Christ hath conferred upon them. But take heed Brethren, of complaining without cause. It grieves my heart sometimes to think how shamefully many good people are cheated and defooled in this matter. Many of these Brethren that give out themselves to be the great Afflictors of the liberties of the Church, that make such tragical complaints of the *Presbyterian* *usurpations* and *Entrenchments* of their *pious*, *faithful* *Officers*, that oppose them in their *Government*; and bind their hands that they cannot act according to their Commission from Jesus Christ, under pretence and colour of securing the Churches power, and privilege, and liberty: It is but that they may grasp all the power in their own Hands and in effect Lord it over Gods Heritage, and that the Church may in truth and reality be governed by three or four *Ruling* (you may call them, if you please, *Presbyterian*) Brethren, rather than by the Officers that the Holy Ghost hath made *Officers* and *Rulers*. This is the goodly way whereby our Brethren are wont to provide for their own Liberties. Do but open your eyes and look about you, and mark it in any Church where the Authority of the Elders is disowned and opposed, and tell me whether it be not so justified: that a few *Pragmatical* and *Logomachous Men* (*Contentious* *Homines*, as *Liby* calls some of the *Turbulent* *Tribunes* that opposed the *Consular* *Authority* with that specious pretence of the *Peoples* *liberty*) do boldly usurp and invade the Church power and Authority, and Rule their Brethren and their Rulers also. They must work hard that do

not see this. And just it is that those that will not obey them in the Lord that have the rule over them, should be thus enslaved to the imperious and uncertain Humours of these and those usurping Brethren. And it is to be feared, that many of our Brethren (such is their weakness, and the power of prejudice) will never come humbly and kindly to submit themselves in the Lord to the Government of Jesus Christ in his Church, till they have been soundly scratch'd with this *Bramble Government* of some aspiring and domineering Brethren. But I beseech you, Observe the mischief of this practise. It is a staple Principle of our ablest *Congregational-men*, that as there is a liberty and privilege appertaining to the Brethren; so the Rule and Government (properly so called) is appropriated to the Elders by the appointment of Jesus Christ. Now the Promise and Blessing goes with the Institution, So that where the Elders are in effect set by, and three or four heady Brethren lead the Church and rule all: They are in such Administrations under the wing and shadow of no promise or blessing; which to a gracious heart is a dreadful consideration. Again the loud Out-cry of some is for *Liberty of Conscience*: that they may hold and practise what they will in Religion. This is the *Diana* of some men, and great is the *Diana* of the *Libertines* of this age. I remember *Julian the Apostate*, that malicious and implacable Enemy to Christianity have observed that the *Christian Religion* prospered the more for the severe persecution in *Dioclesian's* Time, and than the *Christians* grew up thicker and faster for being Mowed down with the *Sythe of Bloody Persecution*; He did for a while abstain from severities against the *Christians*, and suffered all men to use what Religion they would: And *Austin* saith of it, *Libertatem perditionis permittit*. He gave men liberty to destroy themselves. Such is the liberty of Conscience, even a liberty of Perdition, that some men are so unconscionably Clamorous for. But remember, that as long as you have liberty to walk in the Faith and Order of the Gospel, and may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all Godliness and Honesty, you have as much liberty of Conscience as *Paul* desired under any Government, *1 Tim. 2. 2*. He that is allowed without molestation to walk with God, and serve him with all good Conscience, hath liberty enough. Never complain, when that is your condition, that you may be as good as you will. Oh take heed in all Societies, and in all Respects of an inordinate and undue Affection of Liberty. *The latter end of it will be Bondage and Slavery.*

10. Consider what will be the latter end of a *Licentious Toleration* of all Opinions and Religions among us. I profess I am heartily for all due mo-

deration. I have a real compassion towards the Infirmitie of the minds of men, the Ignorance, and weaknes, and Errours of their understandings, as well as the passions and other distempers of their Wills and Affections. I know many men are very weak and injudicious, and want *Natural Logic*; and have *Corbennum*, an honest Heart (as *Agass*, as the *Apople* speaks, *Rom. 16. 18.* simple and foolish meaning men) that will *Cic* put *Regulatum*, a judicious and well regulated Head. Many a man hath a good Heart and Affections under the bad conduct and ill steeridge of a very weak Head. Yea many ingenious and witty men are yet very injudicious. I am far from the Barbarous Spirit and Humour of that Giant and Robber *Procrustes*, that was wont cruelly to cut shorter such as were too long, and stretch out those that were too short for his Bed. A tender consideration of the weaknes of men, and due moderation in this case is the Duty of those that cannot but be conscious to themselves of their own infirmitie. Nevertheless I must adde (as I have great reason) that I look upon an unbounded Toleration as the first born of all *Abominations*. If this should be once born and brought forth among us, you may call it *God*; and give the same Reason that the did of the Name of her Son, *Gen. 31. 1.* Behold a Troop cometh, even a Troop of all manner of *Abominations*. This would be not only to open the Wicket, but to fling open the great Gate for the ready Admission and Reception of all *Abominable Hosts*. It is excellently determined by that Judicious and Blessed Man, Mr. Norton; "That Unity in Judgement is to be endeavoured, because Truth is one and indivisible; yet some Difference touching the Truth must be endured, because of the weaknes of men. To tolerate every Thing, and to tolerate nothing, are both intolerable. A Toleration is not an approbation. Those Distinctions; between mixtures in Religion, and Errours in those that profess the same Religion, between Fundamentals and Non-Fundamentals, between Errours held forth by an Erroneous Conscience and a contumacious Will; between persons peaceable in Israel, and Disturbers of the State, between points that are clear, or orderly decided with due time for conviction, and such as are disputable and of depending disquisition, being prudently applied, may be of special use. Thus that excellent Man in his excellent Preface to his Treatise of the sufferings of Christ.

I doubt not but it is the duty of the Civil Magistrate to tolerate what is tolerable, and that some Errours are tolerable as to the practice of them. For the Conscientious person about them is not immediately under the Magistrates Cognizance. He can neither be said to tolerate or persecute men for

for the Errors of Conscience that are no way manifested. And yet no Error is tolerable merely for Conscience sake; or because it is conscientiously maintained by the Erroneous person, and he continually say that he believes in his Conscience. For then a Conscientious Papist or Socinian, or Quaker (the most noxious Heretics in the World) must be conjoined, and suffered; yea, all manner of Idolatry and Hezessy must be tolerated in some persons. The Tolerableness therefore of an Error must be measured & judged either from the nature of the Error it self, or some other circumstances. Sometimes the Error is not only *Extrafundamental*, but so small and inconsiderable, and the manner of holding is so much so modest and peaceable; and the Condition of the State such, as that the *Magistrate may keep his sword in the Scabbard, and no hurt done*. Hence that may be tolerable in one State, that is not in another. As it was well said by a very worthy person in this case: *A weaker Body ought not to suffer that upon it self, upon the account of Charity to Another, that a Stronger may*. No doubt but it belongs to the *Magistrate* to judge what is tolerable in his Dominions in this respect. And the Eye of the Civil *Magistrate* is to be to the securing of the way of God that is duly established. And if any where, this be the Concern and Duty of Rulers, Surely it is most of all so in *New-England*, which is originally a plantation not for Trade but for Religion. Peace & Truth (*Hazakias mercies*, Isa. 39:8. have been the great mercies of this Countrey. Lose we Truth (of Doctrine Worship and Order) and the Design of our Founders is ruined and we are an undone people. So that it is a most unreasonable and importune Thing in those that threaten us, that deny our Churches to be true Churches, that anti-Christianize our *Magistrates*, *Ministers*, Churches and Ordinances, and must do so in Faithfulness to and pursuance of their principles and opinions, to demand or expect a free Toleration. They may as well ask liberty to destroy us. We may justly swear the peace against them (If I may so speak) and say we go in fear, not of our Lives, but, of our Religious Liberties and Enjoyments, dearer then our Lives, because of such men; and supplicate our Rulers that they may be bound to their good behaviour. Boundless Liberty will expose us to great danger. Charity begins at home: and the Charity of a Christian begins at Christ; I mean the Truths, Wayes, Ordinances, Name and Honour of *Jesus Christ*. We must not be so commensurate to *Sectimatical*, *Turbulent*, *Erroneous* persons, as to be cruel, injurious, or unkind to the precious Interest of *Christ* among us. Nature teacheth a man (If I may so say) or Grace should teach a Christian *Magistrate* (If you will allow me the word) *Christ preservation*; I mean, the preservation of the Truth

Ordinances, and Interest of Christ. And I make no question but our Lord Jesus, that in the great day of Account will recount and reward the kindnesses of his people to himself (in his members) in that they gave him meat, when he was hungry; Drink when he was thirsty; took him in, when he was a Stranger; clothed him, when he was naked; visited him, when he was sick or in prison: Math. 25. 34, 35, 36. will in like manner remember and remunerate at that day the kindness and good affection of our pious and faithful Rulers, in that they preserved and secured him (with respect to his Truth, Ordinances, Interests and Concernments of his Kingdome) from the Insolencies and Encroachments of Erroneous & unruly persons. And if it be said, God is to be trusted with the preservation of his Truth. I Answer, So he is to be trusted with the propagation of his Truth: Must Ministers therefore neglect to preach the Truth? or Magistrates to see that the Truth be preached and propagated in their Dominions; and devolve it wholly upon the immediate hand of Christ? God is to be trusted with the preservation of thy Life: wilt thou not therefore in Case of Illness, bleed and vomit, and purge out the peccant and noxious humours? God is to be trusted for the preservation of thy Corn in the Field, when it is growing up: wilt thou not therefore weed thy Corn, and take away what offends, and hinders the thriving of it? If it be replied; But this is no means of God's Appointment. Magistrates have nothing to do with matters of Religion, to interpose and exercise their coercive power in and about the things of God. I Answer. This is a meer begging of the Question, and was never yet proved. But I must not dispute or further expatiate here. I shall only say for an Issue of this point, that Apostacy is the great Crime that many of you brand your Magistrates and Ministers with. What was the judgement and practise of our first Worthies in this matter is sufficiently known. Let the world then judge who are the Apostates in this Case, Those that are for, or those that are against a *Licentious boundless Toleration.*

II. Consider what will be the Latter End of the neglect of the Encouragement and Advancement of Learning among us. It is the Observation of wise men, and indeed a general, sad Complaint, that the Schools languish, and are in a low Condition in the Countrey. And what the end of this will be, who cannot apprehend? Though there are doubtless many Reasons of the languishing of Schools; Yet I am very apt to think what the bottom of all is the want of due Encouragement to Scholars when they are come to maturity, and fitted for service in the Churches. If there be no considerable encouragement, when Scholars are bred up, parents will have

have no heart to breed their children to Earning. Rich men will not, because they have better ways before them to provide for the comfortable subsistence of their Children: and persons of a meaner condition cannot, or at least are discouraged from expending all they can upon their *Childrens Education*, because when that is done, and they are ready for service, there is no *Encouragement*, through the *Slenderness* and *shortness* of the *Ministers maintenance* in most places in the *Country*. I have nothing to offer by way of Advice. I would be loath to bear too hard in this Case upon the people, that are generally poor and low enough. But I would Humbly tender it to the Consideration of the Honourable Court, that so farre as may be without Injury to the people, there may be due provision made in all places. Jesus Christ will take it kindly at your Hands: For it is one of his great Concernments in this *Christian Commonwealth*. Not that I speak in respect of want. I am the Freer to speak this, because it is not my own Concern. Through the Goodness of God and the kindness of a good people, and their professed Subjection to the Gospel of Christ, I have a comfortable Subsistence; which I desire to acknowledge with all Thankfulness. But I cannot but sympathize with, and commiserate the Condition of many others, their Family Straits, and Difficulties, and the many discouragements they labour under. And it is a matter of sorrowful and sad-Relentment with me, that the Nurseries of Piety & Learning, & liberal Education should languish & dye away, as they do, (in my Apprehension) on this account. If this were well considered and provided for, I doubt not but our Schools wou'd revive & flourish again. You have done well for the New Colledge. Thanks be to God as Paul speaks in a Parallel Case. 2 Cor. 9. 15. for his unspeakable Gift. Now therefore perform the doing of it, that, as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which you have. 2 Cor. 8. 11. You have done very well for the Reverend President. I beseech that the Fellows may be remembered also: that there may be a competent, comfortable, and certain allowance made for their Encouragement, who are, next to the President, the Props and Pillars of that Society, and have a careful and Laborious Life of it. Think not that the Common Wealth of Learning may languish: and yet our Civil and Ecclesiastical State be maintained in good plight and Condition. The wisdom and Foresight and Care for future Times of our first Leaders was in nothing more conspicuous and admirable then in the planting of this Nursery: and New-England is enjoying the sweet fruit of it. It be comes all our Faithful and Worthy Patriots that tread in their Steps, to water what they have planted, to superstruct

on their Foundations to support and cherish and go forward with what they have begun, and to carry it on to greater perfection. Otherwise who sees not what Ignorance, and Rudeness, and Barbarism will come in like a Flood upon us? Where there is a contempt or neglect of Learning there is a degeneracy from the Primitive Spirit and Way, as you call it.

12. Last y, Consider what will be the *Latter End* of that great neglect of the Rising Generation among us. The Word in my Text, which is translated *Latter End* [*Acharith*] is sometimes rendred posterity: as *Psal.* 109 13. Let [*Acharith*] his Posterity be cut off. It is the very same word with that in the Text, which is rendred *Latter End*. And it would be happy if we could be wise to understand this, to consider Posterity. We make very solemn Complaints to God, and one to Another of the Degeneracy of the Rising Generation. But are not we to blame? Do we not grievously neglect them? to instruct them, to cherish and promote any good in them, to go before them with a gracious Example, to watch over them according to the mind of Christ? we teach them, (I am afraid) by our Examples to sleight Magistrates, to reproach and vilify Ministers, to be proud, and worldly, and Factions, and Contentious: as if we meant to leave Contention for an Inheritance to our Children, and to provide for the perpetuation of our Brawles and Divisions to succeeding Generations. As if men were so much in love with Contention, that it were not enough for them to contend while they live, but they had a mind to do it when they are dead: I mean to transmit and make over their Strifes and Variances, and Emulations, and Wraths, and Divisions, and petty Enmities to after Ages: And so to contend and quarrel, in respect of the virtue and influence of their Example, to the end of the World. But alas! What good do we do them? Our Children are little beholden to us. We own them so far as to baptize them: But then Fare ye well, Children, we have nothing more to do with you. This is (as a wise Man said ingeniously) just as you are wont to Brand your Cattel, and then turn them into the woods: Or as the Popish Priests in the Indies drive scores of Indians to the Water, and Baptize them, and set down so many for Christian Converts they have made, and then let them run wild into the Woods again to their old Pagan courses. I fear God is angry with us on this account. Certainly something should be done. If we are not agreed in all particulars, as to the way and manner and other circumstances: yet let us practise so far, as we have attained; and Fast and Pray, and Consult the Scriptures, and discourse out things in a Brotherly way (without Heats and Animosities) and wait upon God for the further and fuller Discovery of his mind to us, and

and be willing that Truth should be Truth, how contrary soever to any of our apprehensions. Sad it is to consider how many poor Children have their Souls overgrown with Ignorance, Atheism, Security, and Profaneness, and are going to Destruction without controul, whilst we are contending and quarrelling about these things. Ob consider (with bowels of Affection and Compassion) how sad the latter end of our shameful neglect of Piety will be.

Thus (Honoured and Beloved in our Lord) Let us be persuaded in this our day to consider what will be the latter end of our sinful and unsuitable *Departments before the Lord*: and be sure to make a right Judgement of it. To that purpose take these Directions.

1. Consult and credit Scripture-Testimony in this matter. The good Word of God informs you what the end of these and those ways will be, and is able to make you wise in this respect, if you listen to it. The Scripture tells us, that the end of false Teachers will be according to their works, 2 Cor. 11. 15. And of those that blindly follow them to fall into the Dish (or Pit of Destruction) with them, Mat. 15. 14. that the end of Worldy-mindedness will be Destruction, Phil. 3. 19. the end of Backsliding and Apostasy will be the loss of Gods Favour, and Perdition, Heb. 10. 38, 39. The end of unfruitfulness will be to be cut aown, Luk. 13. 7, 9. and burned, Heb. 6. 8. That the latter end, and wages of sin (one word in the Hebrew signifies both end and wages) will be Death, Rom. 6. 21. The end of the ways of sin depends upon the constitution of God in his Law and Covenant, and the sanction thereof: and the Scripture acquaints us faithfully with it. If you would understand the end of man, you must go into the Sanctuary, Psal. 73. 17. To hear Gods Counsel and Instruction in the Scripture is the way to be wise in and about your latter end, Prov. 19. 20. Make Gods Testimonies the men of your counsel (as David phraseeth it, Psal. 119. 24.) in this matter.

2. Consult instructing Examples and Experiences in order to a right Understanding of the latter end of your ways. The Scripture furnisheth you richly with considerable instances. The way of Sensuality, Security, Neglect of Gods Worship, Degeneracy of the Children of the Church, and corrupting their way ruined the old World. The way of Uncleaness and of unnatural Lusts ruined Sodom and Gomorrah, the Cities which God overthrew and repented not. The way of Persecution and Oppression of the Church of God ruined Pharaoh and his Co-partners and Followers. The way of Rebellion against Civil and Ecclesiastical Authority ruined Korah and his Company: when they were too hard for Moses

in 3. *Baron* (being Princes of the Assembly, Men of Renown and Famous in the Congregation) God Himself took them into his own hands, and destroyed them in a stupendous and dreadful manner. Contempt and ill usage of the Lords Messengers, and idolatrous practices ruined the State of *Israel* and *Judah*. Contempt of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Messengers, and putting away the Gospel, brought unparalleled Calamities upon the Jews. Nay call to mind all your own experiences. Have you not known or heard of these and those Professors abroad, that in the time of their liberty and prosperity were wanton, proud, worldly, despisers of Gods Ministers, contentious and quarrelsome? And do you not know the end of it? Such Examples are instructing, and for our Admonition.

3. Consider wisely the natural Tendency of the wayes themselves. Some wayes of sin do in a way of *Physical efficiency*, directly and in their own natural Tendency lead to misery and ruine: as *Inemperance* to the Destruction of Health and Life; *Prodigality* to Poverty and Misery, that it comes on like an Armed man, violently and irresistably; And so *Idleness* and *Neglect of a mans Calling and Business* naturally works that way, and hath the like issue. So Divisions among a people lead the way to ruine. It is a proverbial expression of our Saviour, *a Kingdome divided against it self will not stand*. So any Common-wealth, where the Leaders and People are divided, any Church or Churches divided, any Societies divided; they must fall, cannot stand: Not only Because God is angry with them, but also from the nature of the thing it self. Divisions pull down Societies, open a Door and make a Gap for Adversaries and Oppressors to break in at, that are watching all Advantages. *Ex quo Discordia Cives Perducit Mijeros!* The fall of Schools and contempt of Learning will make way for Rudeness, Ignorance, Want of able Instruments to manage Church and State Affairs, Irreligion and Ruine to this poor Country. This or that miserable Event and End lies in the Womb of these and those wayes. Some wayes of sin naturally breed, are pregnant, and will in time travel with, and bring forth this or that woful issue. Oh *Read your End in your way*. You may do it certainly in some cases. As there are *ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας*, *Hib. 6. 9.* things that accompany Salvation, and have a coherence with it. So there are also *ἐχόμενα ἀπώλεις* Things that have connexion with Destruction, not only in respect of the positive constitution of God, but also in regard of the Nature and Frame of the things themselves: The due consideration whereof may be of great use in your passing a Judgement upon the end of your wayes.

4. *Be of God to make you wise in this matter, and to give you understanding and considering hearts.* God only hath a perfect and infallible knowledge of events, and of the *latter end* of things. It is his Prerogative Royal which he assumes to himself as his own peculiar, *Isai. 41. 22, 23.* Oh therefore rest not in your own Gueses and Conjectures, and weak apprehensions, but Address your selves humbly to the God of Wisdom and Knowledge (who gives liberally to such as ask him) for this understanding and judicious consideration, that you may be able to make a true judgement of your *Latter End*. The Lord saith in the Text: *Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter End.* Now the best Reply and Return that can be made to it, is, *O Lord, that we were so wise indeed!* Dost thou wish it for us? So do we through thy Grace wish it for our selves. But thou alone art able to make us wise, and thou givest wisdom and grace with a liberal hand and upbraidest not. O make us wise indeed in this matter, and help us to an understanding, serious consideration of our *Latter end*. *Da quod jubet*: Give us that Wisdom, and Understanding. Consideration thou requirest of us. Let thy Word be Operative to Work it, as well as Optative to wish it in us.

And now (*much Honoured and Beloved*) Let me tell you plainly, that the great sense I have of the *Displeasure of God* against us, and the *sad Apprehension*, and *Abiding of approaching calamities*, unless *speedy Repentance* and *Reformation* of our wayes obviate and intercept them, hath opened my mouth to you in this manner. God is certainly angry with *New-England*. Thence many wise men are *insatuated*, many good men are become *perverse* and *froward*, Counsels carried *headlong*, all manner of good almost *obstructed* in all Societies; our *Chariot Wheels* are *taken off*, we *move heavily along*, scarce any thing goes forward as it was wont to do among us. As it no longer the *Light*, but now the *dark* and *black side of the Cloud* were turned towards us, and the Lord were casting such a *dreadful look* upon us, as he did upon the *Egyptians* in the *morning-watch* when he troubled them. *Exod. 14. 26, 27.* And which is worst of all, there is no Appearance of any Help or Remedy. *Oh the Despair of the Counsel, and the Inefficacy of the Decree of God!* When misery is determined, nothing shall intervene or stand in the way to hinder it. Verily, unless the Lord help us to Consider our wayes and repent and return to him, from whom we have deeply revolted, and recover our standing under the wonted Influences of his Favour and pleasant Beauty that hath been upon us, we may certainly look for sad Times. What should I say then? But, *Rejoice Oh you Adversaries of the Cause and Interest of Jesus Christ;*

of the Liberties and sweet Enjoyments of the people of God in New-England. We are doing your work for you; we are putting a Staff in your Hands even the Indignation of the Lord (*Isai. 10. 5.*) which is kindled against us by our sins: We are making God our Enemy, *our Defence and Glory is departing from us*, that strong hedge of Protecting Providence that hath been about us is breaking down, we are pulling up the Stakes of it with our own Hands, and laying our selves open to your Inroads and Incursions. The day of Edoms Sons, who would not only deface the beauty, break down the battlements and uncover the Roof of our Sion: but raise our Jerusalem to the ground; even your day, which you have looked for, plotted for, longed for, is now coming apace, wherein you shall mock at our Sabbaths, break down the carved work of our Sanctuary, roar in the midst of our Congregations, spread out your Hands upon all our pleasant things, and say, *Aha, thus would we have it.* Yet rejoice not against us, O our enemies; For when we fall, we shall arise; and when we sit in Darkness, the Lord shall be a Light unto us. And when he shall have performed his whole work upon our Mount Sion and Jerusalem, He will arise, and awake to our judgement, and plead our Cause, and punish the Fruit of the proud heart of Adversaries.

But Oh you dear People of God in New-England, however affected or engaged, Hear, and give ear unto the Word of the Lord, and be not Proud: Give Glory to the Lord your God (by Confession, Humiliation, Repentance and Reformation) before he cause Darkness, and your Feet stumble upon the dark Mountains, *Jerem. 13. 15, 16.* So Consider with Understanding and Judgement what is like to be the Latter end of your sinfull Departments before the Lord, as to put an end to your way of sin, and provocation, and to return to the God of your Mercies whom you have forsaken; and the Rock of your Salvation, whom you have too lightly esteemed. Jerusalem remembered not her Last End, therefore she came down wonderful, by and had no comforter, *Lam. 1. 9.* Not considering aright the Latter End of your Ways will bring you down, though you had set your Nest among the Stars: but the due consideration of it will be the way to wonderful Exaltation.

I am not without some Hopes (though many of your wise and faithful Ministers and Watchmen are almost weary and hopeles) that men of all parties (that are truly pious and serious) will at last consider and reform what is amiss, and accept well what hath been spoken by way of Reprehension and Admonition. And indeed it would be sad with us, if our sins should be like those which the Historian complains of, *Quia*

but nec visio vestra, nec Remedia peti possumus: Our Distemper, such as will ruine us, and yet our Temper, Disposition and Frame such, that we cannot bear the Application of the Remedy. Then indeed we do *inleceiter agrotare*, and may conclude that our sickness will be terminated in the Death and Dissolution, in the Loss and dejected Bereavement of those Enjoyments that are dearest to us. But if the Lord give you Hearing Ears, and obedient Hearts, that you Consider and Repent, and turn to the Lord your God: then will he be with you, as he hath been with your Fathers and Predecessors (those Worthies of the Lord that are now at rest, whose Memory is blessed and whose Names shall be had in everlasting remembrance) and no Weapon that is formed against you shall prosper. Whether there shall be secret Plottings, or open Assaulting and Running upon your Civil and Sacred Liberties: God will either defeat the Counsels and frustrate the Attempts and Hopes of Adversaries; Or turn all that may befall you in a way of Affliction to your singular good, the great Furtherance of the Gospel, and Advantage of the Glorious Interest of Christ among us

Humbling and Sorrowful times may come upon you: But the Lords design in humbling and proving you will be that he may do you good at your Latter End: Though the Earth should tremble and reel to and fro, the Sea roar, the Admountains be cast into the midst of the Sea, and there be a Day of Gloominess and thick Darkness coming upon the Reformed Churches, and there should be a Day of trouble and Treading down, and Perplexity in this Valley of Vision: yet I have Commission from the Lord to say, It shall be well with the Righteous. *Isai. 3. 10.* Ob saith Balaam (when enlightened) Let me dye the Death of the Righteous, and let my last end be like his, *Numbers 23. 10.* Mark the Perfect Man (saith David) and behold the Upright: for the end of that Man is Peace. Verily, verily saith our Saviour to his Disciples, *John 16. 20.* You shall weep and lament, but the World shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. All the Sorrows, and Afflictions, and Sufferings of the People of God shall end in joy. They may sow in Tears but they shall reap in joy. *Psal 126. 5.* All their Troubles shall undoubtedly be concluded and issued in everlasting Consolations. Aimelessness in the end will be the portion of such as live in pleasure and sin: but will be the happiness of the Children of God to receive their Good Things at last, *Luk. 16. 25.*

Whatever Dayes may come upon a sinful and secrete World that lies in wickedness, or upon a slumbering, Slothful, licentious Generation of Professors: yet it shall undoubtedly go well with the humble, waking, faith-

For Servants of God, that maintain or recover their first love to the person, Truths, Ordinances, Messengers and wayes of Jesus Christ, and walk with God in a course of *Evangelical Obedience*, according to the Tenor of his Covenant; having a sorrowful sense of the Sufferings of Gods people abroad, and the Sins and provocations at Home. *Verily the Latter End of such men and Women, shall be Unspeakable peace and Happiness.*

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